

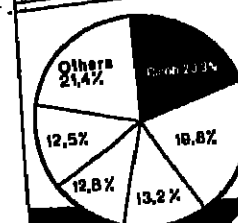
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# Star

Jordan's political, economic  
and cultural weekly

AMMAN, 12 — 18 MARCH 1992, VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1

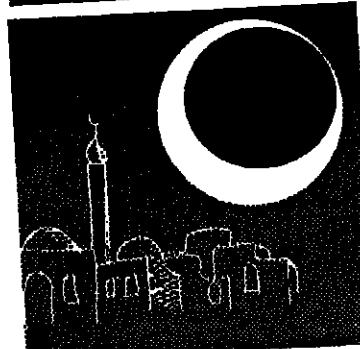
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## JORDAN WEEK

A non-conventional look  
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- US police bust Arabs
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# JORDANI

## WEEK

### Ramadan and price hikes

Jordanians are complaining publicly about the sudden hike in foodstuff prices since the beginning of Ramadan. Price increases have included everything from fresh produce to frozen meat and canned food. The Ministry of Agriculture has assured consumers that vegetable prices will begin to go down as soon as Ghor Safi produce becomes available on the market. Cold weather and snow storms have destroyed green houses, poultry and dairy farms in the upper and central Jordan Valley and losses are estimated in millions. Eggs and chicken have become scarce and the Ministry of Supply has given its approval to import frozen meat from eastern Europe. About 10 tons of mutton from Bulgaria arrived by plane on Saturday and more is on the way.

Minister of Supply Mr. Mohammad Al Saqqaf has said that egg production has fallen by 30 per cent this winter while consumption has risen by 15 per cent, except during Ramadan when the rate falls by 50 per cent. He added that the ministry is working to put limits on egg exports and to control smuggling.

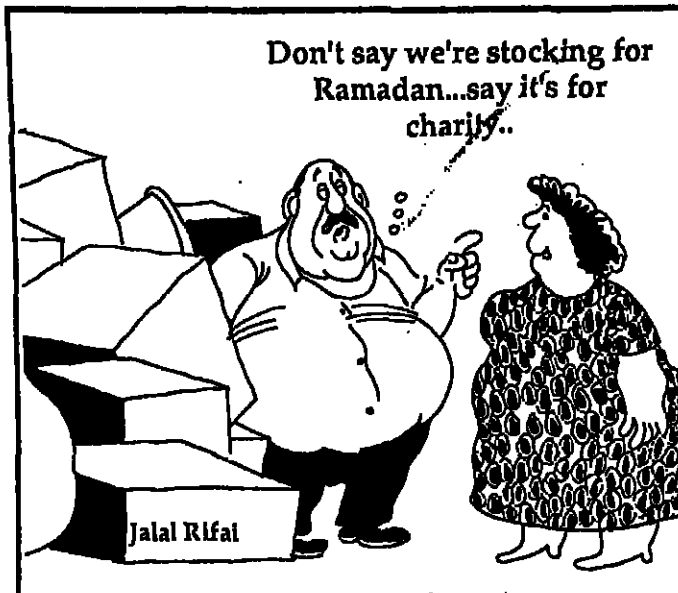
Al Rai columnist Mr. Tareq Massaruch said Jordanians should not feel bad, since the extra cost of consumer goods goes directly as a form of compensation to farmers. He said price hikes should not mean more profit to merchants. He warned the government from siding with city consumers against farmers who lost a whole season's earnings because of bad weather.

### Writers reject normalization

The Jordanian Writers' Association's general committee elected on Friday Lower House deputy Mr. Fakhri Kwar as president and ten other members onto the association's administrative board. During the same session the general committee called on the new board "to resist normalization of relations with the Zionist enemy in cultural, industrial and commercial fields." The committee also called on the presidency of the 18th Arab Writers' Conference to be held in Amman this year to condemn the aggression against Iraq and Libya.

### Students in trouble in former USSR

The Ministry of Higher Education has confirmed that a number of universities in the former Soviet Union have reneged on the clauses of cultural agreements between Jordan and the Soviet Union and have asked Jordanian students to start paying tuition fees. In these agreements, the Soviet Union undertook to pay for all tuition fees, clothes, books, housing and return ticket costs for all Jordanian students studying in the Soviet Union. The Soviet authorities also paid a monthly stipend of 100 roubles. The ministry made it clear that it had never dispatched Jordanian students to the Soviet Union on its own expense. The plight of an unspecified number of Jordanians studying in the new republics is now being monitored by the



cultural attaché in the Jordanian embassy in Moscow. One source said that if the universities insist on their position, nothing can be done to force them to honor a commitment made by a country that does not exist any more.

### Deputies at it again

Sunday's session of the Lower House never convened because the legal quorum was not achieved. Only 47 out of the 80 House members showed up. After waiting for at least an hour, deputy speaker Abdel Karim Al Dughmi called on deputies to leave. Interviewed on television, Mr. Dughmi said he had no idea why such a large number of deputies had failed to show up. For the house to convene, two-thirds (54) of the members must attend. One witty observer feared that Ramadan will now be used as an excuse for the absence of deputies.

Meanwhile, deputy Laith Shbeilat has made a motion to amend article 73 of the Constitution which gives the King the right to postpone the holding of general elections. In his motion, which received the backing of 29 deputies, Mr. Shbeilat said the

extraordinary circumstances which forced the 1976 amendment of the Constitution have ended. He called for the cancellation of paragraphs 4 and 5 of article 73 of the Constitution. The House will debate this and another motion calling for extending the term of the ordinary session from four to nine months.

### White list takes all

The Islamists scored a landslide victory this week when their list overwhelmingly won all seven contested seats of the Engineers Association Council. Mr. Husni Abu Gheida (White List) received 2033 votes (about 46 per cent of the total number of those who voted) to claim the presidency while his contenders Mr. Fathi Hiyasat (Green List I) received 1311 votes and Mr. Ismail Baryoush, the outgoing president from the Green List II, received only 487 votes. Voting had to be extended by another day because of a poor showing by voters. When ballot boxes closed on Saturday only 4433 engineers voted out of 10228 eligible voters.

The failure by the two green

lists to agree on a unified list, resulted in one of the worst election results for the secularists for many years. "Results would certainly have been different if we had voted for one green list," said one disappointed female engineer. "We keep repeating the same mistake every election. The Islamists come out better organized with their supporters sticking by them from the early hours of the morning, while we advertise our divisions and our supporters are sound asleep in their homes," she said.

### US police bust Arabs

The government is said to have received a number of cables from Jordanian citizens living in the south of the United States, claiming that 60 Arabs including Jordanians and Palestinians were recently arrested in Dallas, Texas. The cables spoke of dawn arrests, and said that one of the detainees is a 70-year-old Jordanian. No information was immediately available on the charges or reasons behind the arrest. The American embassy in Amman could not confirm or deny the report.

### Al Sharif drops libel suit

Dr. Nabil Al Sharif has reportedly dropped the libel suit against Lower House deputy Dr. Ahmad Al Abbadi. A report in Sawt Al Sha'ab said a meeting was held last week at the office of Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Mr. Jamal Al Khraisha to reconcile the parties. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education Dr. Thouqan Al Hindawi, Minister of Information Mr. Mahmoud Al Sharif, Minister of Supply Mr. Mohammad Al Saqqaf and deputies Dr. Ali Fajir and Dr. Abbadi himself. During the meeting Dr. Abbadi said he did not mean Dr. Al Sharif in his budget session response in the Lower House.

### Expats may pay more

In response to His Majesty King Hussein's letter to Prime Minister Sharif Zaid ben Shaker, the government has decided to schedule duty payment on cars for a period of four years. Ad-Dustour newspaper reported that the Customs Dept. has decided to make a 15 per cent increase on the value of the cars' interest, and to add other fees and duties when evaluating the cost of the vehicle. It also decided that a down payment of 25 per cent of the value will have to be made immediately and that the remaining balance will be divided into 48 installments. Owners will have to take out comprehensive insurance cover on their vehicles and will have to mortgage the cars to the Customs Dept. About 8000 cars have yet to be processed by the department.

### A study for \$120,000

Lower House deputy Fares Al Nabulsi has received a response from the Minister of Transport Mr. Ali Suheimat regarding the consultancy contract between Royal Jordanian (RJ) and Arthur Anderson. The minister said Arthur Anderson is doing a three-phase study of RJ and will present a final report during the coming two months. He also said the cost of the study is \$120,000.

## After round four of the Washington bilaterals: Palestinians offer interim autonomy plan, Israel looks to June elections

By Lina Arafat  
Special to The Star

ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE and the Palestinians' offer of concrete proposals for the interim autonomy period is focusing attention on the settlement issue, a central goal of Palestinian negotiating strategy, a member of the Palestinian delegation has said.

Israel's negative position was more exposed to public opinion, that of the American government and the international community," said Mr. Ghassan Khatib. "As we continued to concentrate on the settlement issue, the Israeli position became all the more isolated."

Importantly, the question of the settlements and their relation to the progress of the peace talks was being highlighted at a time when Israel was desperately trying to secure \$10 billion in loan guarantees to build settlements. Realizing this, the Bush Administration last week pointedly linked the question of settlements with the loan guarantee is-



Ghassan Khatib

sue, in effect making Israeli Prime Minister's Yitzhak Shamir's worst dream come true.

While the question of loan guarantees was being heatedly discussed, the Palestinians, in moving to substantive rather than procedural issues, presented an outline of their concept for the Palestinian interim self-governing authority (PISGA). The outline of the PISGA model is based on free elections

under international supervision and entails the orderly transfer of the powers and responsibilities at present exercised by the Israeli military and other Israeli authorities in the occupied territories," Mr. Khatib said. "Because the source of authority in this period is crucial to us, we focused on an elected body of 180 Palestinians as the source of authority for our people in this interim arrangement."

By introducing their model for PISGA in this round, the overall goal of the Palestinians in the latest round seems to be to strengthen the aim of establishing a Palestinian self-governing authority as part of the interim agreements for a transitional period. "These proceedings must enable the Palestinian people to gain control over political, economic and other decisions that affect our lives and our future," Mr. Khatib said.

It is in keeping the Palestinians' future in mind that Mr. Khatib pointed to the Israeli elections as a possible turning point in relations between Palestinians and Israelis and their respective positions. "It is important to take the Israeli elections into consideration," he said. "Shamir should not be able to continue saying that Likud's policy permits the continuation of settlements while at the same time continuing peace negotiations."

## FOR THE RECORD

Foreign Minister Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber will head Jordan's delegation to the Arab foreign ministers meetings, which will be held in Cairo in the first week of April. The Arab League meetings are expected to improve inter-Arab relations and create a better working climate. A similar meeting for the Arab ministers of information, which was scheduled to convene in Cairo in the middle of February was postponed until August. It too was expected to focus on Arab cooperation.

The management of the Arab Engineering Industries Co. is expected to ask a foreign contractor to build the company's Irbid factory, which includes production lines for a variety of metal and iron castings to be used in agriculture and housing. The cost of the plant will exceed the company's capital of JD 15 million, The Star was told.

The government has decided to issue development bonds worth JD 6 million on 1 April. Meanwhile, the government received a memorandum from the Russian Federation government asking Jordan to put forward a quick debt repayment plan. The memo proposed that Jordan could repay part of the \$30 million in goods and foodstuffs in addition to phosphate and potash.

The Prime Minister's office has asked the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to propose an emergency plan to repair the old water network in Amman and other cities to prevent leaking. Initial studies have found that at least JD 100 million are needed to repair the network, while ministry sources said that about 40 per cent of water pumped through the networks never reaches its final destination.

The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. has decided to build large storage tanks in the south of the kingdom to store various petroleum products in order to cope with exceptional weather conditions. Cost is expected to exceed JD 1 million.

The Glass Industries Co. has asked the government for a JD 3 million loan to cover losses estimated at JD 2 million. Meanwhile, the government is expected to take measures soon to deal with losing public companies like Sawt Al Sha'ab newspaper, the Glass Industries Co. and others.

The government has officially cancelled a contract to buy French-made jets in view of the Kingdom's financial problems, The Star has learned.

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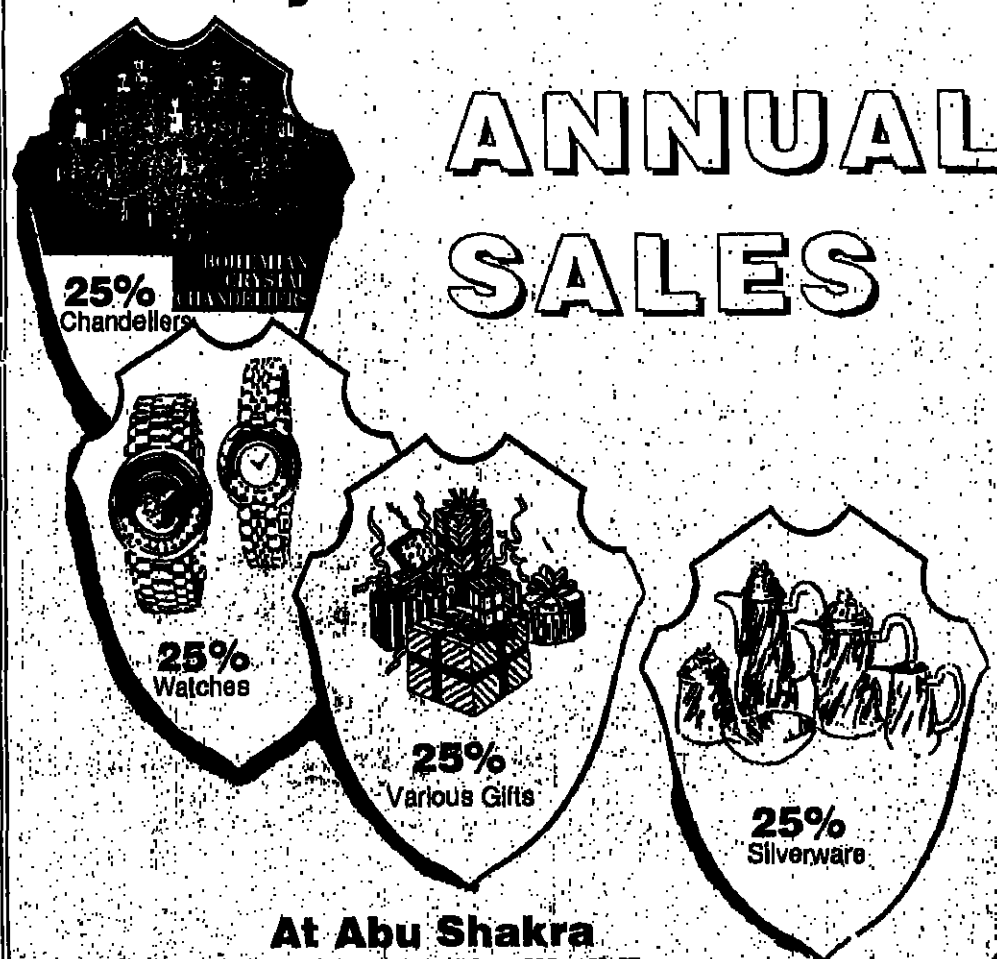
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By Kate Danels  
Star Staff Writer

## Arab Association for Women and Development: Raising women's awareness of their value and potential

A GLOBAL tribute was paid to women this week, as Jordan and the world honored Sunday's anniversary of International Women's Day. It marked a day of solidarity amongst women — irrespective of nationality, class or creed, and reaffirmed the necessity of ensuring equality for women in an often discriminatory world.

Lamis Nasser, coordinator of The Arab Association for Women and Development (AWAD), was among a number of ministers, officials, working women and other personalities who attended a three-day conference organized by The Business and Professional Women's Club in observance of this annual event.

"AWAD is committed to raising women's awareness about their responsibilities, rights and their role in development," said Ms Nasser, explaining the contributions of her organization. Established through the initiative of HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal, the AWAD project functions as a Pan Arab communications network, conducting research studies, holding seminars and conferences, and liaising with Arab decision-makers and intellectuals.

Analysis of information gathered from the Women's Day conference will thus be stored in AWAD's data bank and then transferred to other institutions. Topics of discussion included

the Jordanian working woman, her rights and legal status. "Jordan's female work force participates little in trade due to both social and financial factors, and men still predominate in the Professional Guild Associations," said Ms Nasser. "However there is one field in which women feature highly, being agricultural labor, yet they are greatly underestimated and invisible in most research studies."

Statistics for women in the public service sector revealed an alarming imbalance between the sexes. "There are no women in higher government positions, no women on the boards of directors at the Chambers of Commerce and Trade, no women on the boards of professional guilds and no women judges," said Ms Nasser.

"It is not so much a question of legislation," she added, "It is a question of changing both men's and women's attitudes. For example, there are no laws that forbid women to become members of parliament, yet we have no women MPs."

Having been in public service herself for many years, Ms Nasser said that discrimination against women in this sector is



Lamis Nasser

largely down to the personal views of the ministers in charge. "I was the first married woman diplomat to serve abroad for the foreign service. I rarely felt discriminated against for being a woman, but it was all too good to be true. One foreign minister decided to decree that all married women diplomats be transferred from the political to the administrative stream of the ministry. It is a pity — unlike other Arab countries, Jordan has so far not had one woman ambassador."

Besides examining women and employment, AWAD are considering the legal status and rights of women, and the roots of legislative discrimination. Ms Nasser contests the argument that the tenets of Islam and the Shari'a are to blame. "Islam greatly honors women," she said, "and the teachings of the Holy Quran do not discriminate between men and women. Any discrimination is created by man-made laws that we have inherited from the Ottoman Empire and archaic European laws."

"Too often laws are 'misinterpreted'," she said, arguing that sometimes legal counsellors in ministries misjudge the position of women due to their own interpretations of the Islamic Shari'a and laws. Inequalities in the pension, health insurance and social security laws, she stressed, have long been blamed purely on the Shari'a. "Jordanian laws are generally in favor of women," said Ms Nasser. "It is their application that matters." Some laws, nonetheless, remain flagrant examples of unfounded discrimination against women. "A female diplomat, unlike the male diplo-

mat, is not entitled to travel expenses for her husband or children, nor is her family entitled to diplomatic passports," said Ms Nasser, quoting the Diplomatic Status Law. "I remember a female colleague who was serving abroad was denied the expenses of delivering her child. The interpretation given was firstly, that the law cites that hospital expenses are paid for the diplomat's wife to cover her maternity charges but not vice versa, and secondly, that legally it is the man who has to support his wife and pay her fares."

It is through the dissemination of such information that AWAD aims to stimulate women into reconsidering their value and capabilities in society. "I believe that women are able to contribute towards promoting democracy in Jordan, especially in their social capacity," said Ms Nasser. "After all, women constitute half of our society, and a society cannot be democratic with one half only." A change in social attitudes, she claimed, can only lead ultimately to economic and political change.

Her message of advice to Jordanian women was encouraging: "Stick to hard work and devotion," she said. "Remember that a woman has to work twice as hard to be appreciated half as much. Above all, develop a positive self image; armed with education, morals and unselfishness, paths will be open to you."

## CB proposes the setting up of a deposits protection body

AMMAN (Star) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CB) has referred a draft proposal to the government to set up a corporation to guarantee deposits in accordance with the Central Bank law. CB law entitles the bank to join licensed banks and credit corporations in creating a financial institution to guarantee loans and deposits. The Central Bank board of directors adopted the proposal in July last year, but referred it to the government in December.

The Central Bank's move comes in response to what it described as far-reaching banking developments in the last three years. It was referring to the Petra Bank and Bank of Credit and Commerce International cases. It said such an institution would maintain general confidence in monetary and banking sectors in times of crises.

The institution would make the responsibility of compensating depositors with the Central Bank, commercial banks and depositors combined. In CB's view it would remove direct responsibility from the back of the national treasury.

The sources said the existence of such an institution would be an asset to the national economy during times of economic transitions and problems within the banking sector. The Central Bank had studied similar institutions in other countries so as to benefit from past experiences, the sources added.

While preparing the proposal, the Central Bank consulted with commercial and other licensed banks and has received numerous suggestions and counter proposals.

The government is expected to refer the proposal to its financial committee which will then make its final recommendation. ■

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By Fahd Salameh

MR ADI Mdanat was born in 1938 in Amman, and it is to this city that he owes his memories of his childhood and part of his youth. He studied his primary and part of his secondary education at The Bishop School, but due to family circumstances he completed his secondary and university education in Damascus. During his university years, he published his first short story in Damascus. Although Adi Mdanat obtained his degree in law, this did not prevent him from pursuing his literary interests, and during the first few years that followed his graduation he produced and published several short stories that were well received by critics at that time.

Absorbed in the public and private affairs of that period, Adi found little space for his creative writing, and it was not until 1976 that he published two of his short stories in *Al-Rai* newspaper, the first to appear in a decade. In 1983, his first short story collection appeared under the title *Patient No. 12: Unusual Phases* and in 1991, his second collection was published in Amman by The Ministry of Culture.

By the end of the same year, his first novel, *The Alien* appeared, which will be the focus of this edition.

Adi Mdanat is a member of the Jordanian Writers' Association and participates actively in its seminars on the short story and the novel. He is also a member of The Jordanian Lawyers' Syndicate, with special commitment to issues relating to work and labor problems.

His novel *The Alien* was published by El-Ahli Publishing House, Damascus, 1991. Although the 140-page story is conventional in form, characterization, plot, structure, and technique, it is particularly revolutionary in its content. It is a portmanteau of social criticism, philanthropic persuasions and ethical and aesthetic evaluations. In this respect, it could be considered as a pioneering work of



Adi Mdanat

art that tackles a variety of themes and concepts, hitherto left untouched by many of his contemporaries.

The protagonist is a member of the lower middle class. Mr Hassan is a 54-year-old headmaster whose retirement takes place during the events of the novel; a widower of seven years, living in his old house, a long distance from his married son Loufi, and his married daughter, Suad.

His loneliness and the monotony of his daily routine is suddenly interrupted by an unexpected, apparently unpleasant intruder whom he finds inside his house. His unsuccessful attempt to drive out the ragged, bruised creature ends up in with him realizing that she suffers from auditory and oral disabilities. This discovery arouses in him both pity and fear. Pity, for the defenseless, handicapped, poor girl and fear of the unknown — of society's response to the existence of a young girl under the same roof as an old widower. He also feared the restrictions that would be placed on his own freedom, resulting from having a stranger in the house after having lived in soli-

tude for seven years.

The experience narrated in the novel lasts only seven days and ends abruptly on the eighth day as it began, but it provides a three dimensional revelation, a source of enlightenment not only for the protagonist, but for the reader as well.

It reveals, firstly, that the innocent primitive creature, represented by the alien girl, is more genuine in feeling than the pre-emptive claims of people who boast of being civilized. In the second place, it shows the special value that each individual human has even if that human being suffers from one or more physical handicaps.

Thirdly, it exposes the fallacy of social stability, based on pseudo-moral integrity — a cover that conceals the human jungle where the weak are oppressed and exploited by the strong for profit and gain, regardless of the suffering caused.

The main characters of the novel are Mr Hassan, and the forlorn, deaf-and-dumb girl. These characters are fully developed both in depth and extension, both are round characters with characteristics that make them true-to-life. However, there are sketches of various minor characters that form the social milieu in which the protagonists move, and who play major roles in influencing events and their outcome.

In this respect, we can find three, contrasting yet often complementary, social circles that form the world of the novel. There is the cafe circle of chess players — young and old men with different political affiliations and varying social ranks, who seek asylum from their po-

litical and social griefs by playing chess. The second circle is Mr Hassan's neighbors, whose children used to harass the defenseless young girl in the street before she took refuge in his house. The humanitarian guise behind which those neighbors conceal their real intentions is gradually unmasked with the progression of events. The third and final social circle is that of Mr Hassan's daughter, her husband and children, and his son and daughter-in-law. This circle attempts to impose a sort of guardianship on the behavior and conduct of the headmaster, expressing their profound care for his comfort and safety, a claim that does not ring soundly to the lonely old man.

The social circles practice opposing influences on Mr Hassan, and his desire to please them only adds problems to his troubled soul. The following excerpt from the novel shows the neighbors signing a petition to the ministry of social development, requesting an immediate arrangement for "the mad girl" to be taken into one of its institutions, and their insistence that the girl should not leave Mr Hassan's house before such an arrangement is made. The third circle, on the other hand, reject the notion that "the mad girl" should be in their father's house, and consider her presence an injurious stigma to them.

The excerpt takes us from the point when the neighbors leave Mr Hassan's house, urging him not to waste time in submitting the petition, and to keep the girl temporarily in his house.

"For a while, he felt relieved, but then he felt the weightiness

Focus on Jordanian Literature (7)

## Adi Mdanat: In search of ethical, aesthetic evaluations

of the responsibility he had shouldered, placed, as though between a pair of pincers. Suad and Loufi would not hear of keeping the girl at his house, and the neighbors would not hear of her leaving his house, so what should he do now?

It is true that his life had never been satisfactory, he had experienced little beauty, his disappointments were always greater than his successes, and he had failed even to attain his own aspirations. Yet, his life dragged on smoothly and significantly without any relish, and would have probably dragged on without any exhilarating, exciting, or agonizing surprises, had it not been for this transient incident which could have remained so, but for his damned absurd conduct that had interrupted the rhythm and equilibrium of his life.

He held the signed petition and thought of the lie contained in it, who would expect the ministry to respond positively to several signatures, to sympathize with, adopt, and provide the girl with education, training, and accommodation? Scores of similar girls swarm the streets of Amman, unattended to by either the ministry of development or state institutions; and if the lie were so evident, why should he vindicate it? Can there be anything imperceptibly concealed? Can there be any undeclared motives dictating his conduct? If he were given sufficient time, he would reveal them brazenly and straight forwardly to himself, or unveil himself. He was taken in by the accelerating flow of events, recovering from a crisis, only to find himself immersed in another...

In *The Alien*, Adi Mdanat confronts us with a moral dilemma that has far-reaching, social implications: A disabled young girl, with an exceptional propensity for acquiring and applying

Continued on page 15



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By Kate Daniels  
Star Staff Writer

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## Arab Association for Women and Development:

# Raising women's awareness of their value and potential



Lamis Nasser

the Jordanian working woman, her rights and legal status. "Jordan's female work force participates little in trade due to both social and financial factors, and men still predominate in the Professional Guild Associations," said Ms Nasser. "However there is one field in which women feature highly, being agricultural labor, yet they are greatly underestimated and invisible in most research studies."

Statistics for women in the public service sector revealed an alarming imbalance between the sexes. "There are no women in higher government positions, no women on the boards of directors at the Chambers of Commerce and Trade, no women on the boards of professional guilds and no women judges," said Ms Nasser.

"It is not so much a question of legislation," she added. "It is a question of changing both men's and women's attitudes. For example, there are no laws that forbid women to become members of parliament, yet we have no women MPs."

Having been in public service herself for many years, Ms Nasser said that discrimination against women in this sector is

Besides examining women and employment, AWAD are considering the legal status and rights of women, and the roots of legislative discrimination. Ms Nasser contests the argument that the tenets of Islam and the *Shari'a* are to blame. "Islam greatly honors women," she said, "and the teachings of the Holy Quran do not discriminate between men and women. Any discrimination is created by man-made laws that we have inherited from the Ottoman Empire and archaic European laws."

"Too often laws are 'misinterpreted'," she said, arguing that sometimes legal counsellors in ministries misjudge the position of women due to their own interpretations of the Islamic *Shari'a* and laws. Inequalities in the pension, health insurance and social security laws, she stressed, have long been blamed purely on the *Shari'a*. "Jordanian laws are generally in favor of women," said Ms Nasser. "It is their application that matters." Some laws, nonetheless, remain flagrant examples of unfounded discrimination against women. "A female diplomat, unlike the male diplo-

mat, is not entitled to travel expenses for her husband or children, nor is her family entitled to diplomatic passports," said Ms Nasser, quoting the Diplomatic Status Law. "I remember a female colleague who was serving abroad was denied the expenses of delivering her child. The interpretation given was firstly, that the law cites that hospital expenses are paid for the diplomat's wife to cover her maternity charges but not vice versa, and secondly, that legally it is the man who has to support his wife and pay her fares."

It is through the dissemination of such information that AWAD aims to stimulate women into reconsidering their value and capabilities in society. "I believe that women are able to contribute towards promoting democracy in Jordan, especially in their social capacity," said Ms Nasser. "After all, women constitute half of our society, and a society cannot be democratic with one half only." A change in social attitudes, she claimed, can only lead ultimately to economic and political change.

Her message of advice to Jordan's women was encouraging: "Stick to hard work and devotion," she said. "Remember that a woman has to work twice as hard to be appreciated half as much. Above all, develop a positive self image; armed with education, morals and unselfishness, paths will be open to you."

## CB proposes the setting up of a deposits protection body

AMMAN (Star) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CB) has referred a draft proposal to the government to set up a corporation to guarantee deposits in accordance with the Central Bank law. CB law entitles the bank to join licensed banks and credit corporations in creating a financial institution to guarantee loans and deposits. The Central Bank board of directors adopted the proposal in July last year, but referred it to the government in December.

The Central Bank's move comes in response to what it described as far-reaching banking developments in the last three years. It was referring to the Petra Bank and Bank of Credit and Commerce International cases. It said such an institution would maintain general confidence in monetary and banking sectors in times of crises.

The institution would make the responsibility of compensating depositors with the Central Bank, commercial banks and depositors combined. In CB's view it would remove direct responsibility from the back of the national treasury.

The sources said the existence of such an institution would be an asset to the national economy during times of economic transitions and problems within the banking sector. The Central Bank had studied similar institutions in other countries so as to benefit from past experiences, the sources added.

While preparing the proposal, the Central Bank consulted with commercial and other licensed banks and has received numerous suggestions and counter proposals.

The government is expected to refer the proposal to its financial committee which will then make its final recommendation.

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By Fahd Salameh

MR ADI Mdanat was born in 1938 in Amman, and it is to this city that he owes his memories of his childhood and part of his youth. He studied his primary and part of his secondary education at The Bishop School, but due to family circumstances he completed his secondary and university education in Damascus. During his university years, he published his first short story in Damascus. Although Adi Mdanat obtained his degree in law, this did not prevent him from pursuing his literary interests, and during the first few years that followed his graduation he produced and published several short stories that were well received by critics at that time.

Absorbed in the public and private affairs of that period, Adi found little space for his creative writing, and it was not until 1976 that he published two of his short stories in *Al-Rai* newspaper, the first to appear in a decade. In 1983, his first short story collection appeared under the title *Patient No. 12: Unusual Phases* and in 1991, his second collection was published in Amman by The Ministry of Culture.

By the end of the same year, his first novel, *The Alien*, appeared, which will be the focus of this edition.

Adi Mdanat is a member of the Jordanian Writers' Association and participates actively in its seminars on the short story and the novel. He is also a member of The Jordanian Lawyers' Syndicate, with special commitment to issues relating to work and labor problems.

His novel *The Alien* was published by El-Ahli Publishing House, Damascus, 1991. Although the 140-page story is conventional in form, characterization, plot, structure, and technique, it is particularly revolutionary in its content. It is a portrait of a social critic, philanthropic persuasions and ethical and aesthetic evaluations. In this respect, it could be considered as a pioneering work of



Adi Mdanat

art that tackles a variety of themes and concepts, hitherto left untouched by many of his contemporaries.

The protagonist is a member of the lower middle class. Mr Hassan is a 54-year-old headmaster whose retirement takes place during the events of the novel; a widower of seven years, living in his old house, a long distance from his married son Lotfi, and his married daughter, Suad.

His loneliness and the monotonous rhythm of his daily routine is suddenly interrupted by an unexpected, apparently unpleasant intruder whom he finds inside his house. His unsuccessful attempt to drive out the ragged, bruised creature ends up in with him realizing that she suffers from auditory and oral disabilities. This discovery arouses in him both pity and fear. Pity, for the defenseless, handicapped, poor girl and fear of the unknown — of society's response to the existence of a young girl under the same roof as an old widower. He also feared the restrictions that would be placed on his own freedom, resulting from having a stranger in the house after having lived in soli-

## Focus on Jordanian Literature (7)

# Adi Mdanat: In search of ethical, aesthetic evaluations

tude for seven years.

The experience narrated in the novel lasts only seven days and ends abruptly on the eighth day as it began, but it provides a three dimensional revelation, a source of enlightenment not only for the protagonist, but for the reader as well.

It reveals, firstly, that the innocent primitive creature, represented by the alien girl, is more genuine in feeling than the pretentious claims of people who boast of being civilized. In the second place, it shows the special value that each individual human has even if that human being suffers from one or more physical handicaps.

Thirdly, it exposes the fallacy of social stability, based on pseudo-moral integrity — a cover that conceals the human jungle where the weak are oppressed and exploited by the strong for profit and gain, regardless of the suffering caused.

The main characters of the novel are Mr Hassan, and the forlorn, deaf-and-dumb girl. These characters are fully developed both in depth and extension, both are round characters with characteristics that make them true-to-life. However, there are sketches of various minor characters that form the social milieu in which the protagonists move, and who play major roles in influencing events and their outcome.

In this respect, we can find three, contrasting yet often complementary, social circles that form the world of the novel. There is the cafe circle of chess players — young and old men with different political affiliations and varying social ranks, who seek asylum from their po-

litical and social griefs by playing chess. The second circle is Mr Hassan's neighbors, whose children used to harass the defenseless young girl in the street before she took refuge in his house. The humanitarian guise behind which those neighbors conceal their real intentions is gradually unmasked with the progression of events. The third and final social circle is that of Mr Hassan's daughter, her husband and children, and his son and daughter-in-law. This circle attempts to impose a sort of guardianship on the behavior and conduct of the headmaster, expressing their profound care for his comfort and safety, a claim that does not ring soundly to the lonely old man.

The social circles practice opposing influences on Mr Hassan, and his desire to please them only adds problems to his troubled soul. The following excerpt from the novel shows the neighbors signing a petition to the ministry of social development, requesting an immediate arrangement for "the mad girl" to be taken into one of its institutions, and their insistence that the girl should not leave Mr Hassan's house before such an arrangement is made. The third circle, on the other hand, reject the notion that "the mad girl" should be in their father's house, and consider her presence an injurious stigma to them.

The excerpt takes us from the point when the neighbors leave Mr Hassan's house, urging him not to waste time in submitting the petition, and to keep the girl temporarily in his house.

"For a while, he felt relieved, but then he felt the weightiness

of the responsibility he had shouldered, placed, as though between a pair of pincers. Suad and Lotfi would not hear of keeping the girl at his house, and the neighbors would not hear of her leaving his house, so what should he do now?"

It is true that his life had never been satisfactory, he had experienced little beauty, his disappointments were always greater than his successes, and he had failed even to attain his own aspirations. Yet, his life dragged on smoothly and significantly without any relish, and would have probably dragged on without any exhilarating, exciting, or agonizing surprises, had it not been for this transient incident which could have remained so, but for his damned absurd conduct that had interrupted the rhythm and equilibrium of his life.

He held the signed petition and thought of the lie contained in it, who would expect the ministry to respond positively to several signatures, to sympathize with, adopt, and provide the girl with education, training, and accommodation? Scores of similar girls swarm the streets of Amman, unattended to by either the ministry of development or state institutions; and if the lie were so evident, why should he vindicate it? Can there be anything imperceptibly concealed? Can there be any undeclared motives dictating his conduct? If he were given sufficient time, he would reveal them brazenly and straight forwardly to himself, or unveil himself. He was taken in by the accelerating flow of events, recovering from a crisis, only to find himself immersed in another...

In *The Alien*, Adi Mdanat confronts us with a moral dilemma that has far-reaching, social implications: A disabled young girl, with an exceptional propensity for acquiring and applying

Continued on page 15



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By Maggie James

## Jordan's harvest of ancient cultures

LIVERPOOL — Artefacts from two of the best known archaeological sites in Jordan, Petra and Jerash, were amongst highlights of a recent exhibition at the Liverpool Museum in England.

**Jordan: Treasures from an Ancient Land** featured Neolithic statues, mosaics and folk costumes from Petra and Jerash, the finest surviving example of a provincial Roman City.

The Neolithic statues, more than 8,000 years old, are the earliest known representations of the human form, while intricate mosaics from the floors of early Christian churches depict animals and people in remarkable detail.

Folk clothing and silver jewelry worn by bedouin and town folk vividly illustrate the role of costume, particularly in women's lives.

Dr Piotr Bienkowski, curator of Egyptian and Near Eastern Antiquities at the Liverpool Museum, who has been surveying ancient sites in Jordan over the last 10 years, commented, "Jordan sits at the hub of the Middle East, a volatile yet crucial region of the world. In ancient times it was a major communications route to the great empires of Egypt, Assyria, Persia and Rome."

"The exhibition is a culmination of the tremendous progress which has been made over the last 10 years. Traditionally, we have regarded Jordan as peripheral, because the Bible empha-

sises Palestine, but our work has helped to alter the perception of Jordan's strategic role.

"So far most studies on Jordan have been geographical or historical surveys. For the first time we have looked to Jordan as a region with a separate artistic identity. It is an art of synthesis encompassing the influences of countries like Egypt and Mesopotamia. But for all that, its art is original."

Following an initial suggestion by HM Queen Noor, plans for the exhibition were firm in an agreement signed in Amman last year between the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Richard Foster, director of National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside.

In conjunction with the exhibition Bienkowski has written a book entitled *The Art of Jordan: Treasures from an Ancient Land*. He sees the climate and the country's location as the two major factors which have influenced Jordan's history from earliest times. The former, notably the relatively high rainfall, has meant that the fertile north has always been more densely settled by farmers, villagers and town dwellers than the south and east. In some periods in the past

there was no settled population in these areas due to the arid and harsh conditions. The nomadic bedouins were the only inhabitants of much of the country.

He adds that because of its geographical position the country is at the centre of communication routes and routes of trade for the entire Near East. In ancient times control of Jordan was seen as a strategic necessity. It stood on the caravan route from Arabia to Damascus, and it was a valuable source of copper. Each of the great empires occupied the country. Even at times of independent kingdoms, the area was constantly harassed and occasionally occupied by enemy states from the north, east and west.

A variety of sculptures from Neolithic to Roman times, in terracotta, limestone, clay, sandstone and ceramic are testimony



Mosaic floor at Qasr El Hallabat

to the ancient cultures which have influenced the country.

A number of gold, silver, bone, ivory and glass items are also shown and their uses explained. For example, bone was frequently used for harpoons, arrowheads, and other piercing tools such as awls, needles and pins; it was also used for beads.

A brief survey of mosaics tells how the region is rich in this art form — the first mosaic was discovered at Madaba in Jordan in 1880 and they are still being un-

earthed in the area.

Writing on traditional costume in Jordanian culture in the book, Widad Kawar who has been collecting Jordanian, Palestinian and Syrian costumes for more than thirty years, maintains that Jordanian costume is characterized by its elegance, sophistication and originality. Unlike other traditional costumes of the area, Jordanian costume, except for the northern region, is not influenced by any other ethnic attire.

A survey of folk jewelry rounds off the book. Birgit Mershen describes Jordanian folk jewelry as a "portable bank account." Although women wear most of the jewelry they own even during work, it represents a woman's economic reserves in times of need. Interestingly, most pieces of jewelry contain something thought to ward off the 'evil eye'. This partly relates to the ambiguous nature of jewelry: Meant as a means to embellish, to attract attention, it is in itself a source for envy, considered to be one of the main causes for the 'evil eye' which is thought to cause all kinds of damage, says Mershen.

The art and heritage of Jordan is considerable, as reflected by the cornucopia of artefacts representing this ancient culture. ■

**THE ART OF JORDAN: Treasures from an Ancient Land**, Edited by Piotr Bienkowski, Alan Sutton Publishing, 178pp. £14.95

Academic File

"Ahlan" Nabil and Hisham:

## 'We will be more fun than the parliament!'

By Vesna Masharqa  
Special to The Star

JORDAN'S FIRST political theater has emerged — one of the many new arts enterprises which have been springing up in the post-war period.

"We will open up some time after Ramadan in 'Kaan Zamaan' where we are adapting the second floor of the old castle into a theater," said actor and playwright Nabil Sawalha and TV actor and script writer Hisham Yanis. Both actors are currently at the peak of their popularity, featuring with actress Nadira Amran in the TV comedy "Ahlan".

"Our aspiration is to develop a genuine political theater in Jordan and to set high standards for the social satire genre," said Yanis and Sawalha. They also mentioned the topics they aim to focus on in their theater, such as the new world order, political

and geographical borders amongst Arab countries, the impact of new technology on the Arab world, obstacles to the process of world unification and many other aspects of local and Arab life seen from the perspective of ordinary citizens.

Sawalha and Yanis have eminent artistic careers. Sawalha was a founder of the first Jordanian National Theater, and is a prosperous actor and playwright, and Yanis has written 73 bedouin and historical series for TV, besides acting. In the field of social and political comedy both are still remembered as characters in the shows "Between us" (Sawalha) and "Nights of Amman" (Yanis).

"Ahlan" was their first project together, and they recalled it as a wonderful experience. Here they were given maximum freedom of self-expression, and the right to interfere in all aspects of production for the sake of artistic

quality.

"Ahlan" was written and acted by Yanis and Sawalha and was directed by Victoria Omeish, whom they privately called the "lady of golden touches when it comes to beauty and elegance in each shot and its composition."

"Team work is more difficult, but more interesting," said Omeish. "It needs a lot of tolerance, mutual understanding and compromise."

A series of 13 episodes, "Ahlan" has been gathering Jordanian families in front of their TVs every Thursday night. It is presented in the form of excerpts from daily life, shown through a variety of characters belonging to different ethnic, political, social and cultural backgrounds.

"We introduce more than 50 characters," said Yanis, "and for the first time tackle issues like the Parliament, problems in the government, the dreams of people who want to become minis-

ters and many other topics. He said that 70 percent of the show deals with social aspects, disclosing the more sensitive issues of Jordanian traditional life and talking more freely about the intimate sides to marriage and the family.

"Ahlan's" popularity is also down to its imaginative portrayal of society, comically depicted by its contradictions and absurdity. It delves into class attitudes, social values and traditions, and the things that make people think and laugh. As Sawalha summarized:

"We introduce fresh images of odd examples of behavior which have long been taken for granted



as being right. We mirror characters and situations, leaving it for the people to decide what to do after seeing themselves in these mirrors."

Both Sawalha and Yanis confessed that straight acting is less fulfilling for them as actors and their roles as co-stars give less comfort to the ego, but they agreed that their work "enriched their understanding and assessment of the power of giving and cooperating."

Meeting Sawalha and Yanis together one sees their different personalities. They are both sensible and irrational, stubborn and compliant, emotional and rational, thorough and soft. One is talkative, the other economizes his words. Both have a good sense of humor. Their character contradictions help them create spontaneous dramatic tension and a vibrant, comic atmosphere.

Talking of future work, they believe that their political theater will thrive under the growing democratic movement. "The only political theater in Jordan is our Parliament," said Sawalha, "and I am sure we will be more fun than they are." ■

By Mariusz Kuklinski

LONDON — The almost sudden independence of the former Soviet republics in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia has redrawn the political map of the area, giving rise to new alliances and rivalries and new spheres of influence.

A century ago 'The Great Game' was played in the region by Russia and Britain and, when the Cold War ensued, the moribund USSR took on the Russian mantle and found itself pitted against the West as a whole and the United States specifically.

Partly due to the preoccupation of the great powers with domestic problems and with such mundane matters as the fight for reelection by the incumbents, a new 'great game' is yet to materialize. But signs that it is taking shape have become apparent. At the outset, however, the new great game is more likely to involve the emergent regional powers than the distant players from the West.

Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan seem best placed — and poised — to make use of the new opportunities though Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and China are moving in, too. This has obvious rewards as well as risks, as Europeans already have found to their great dismay. The 'liberation' of eastern Europe from communism and the unravelling of the Soviet Union has fuelled movements towards devaluation even in traditionally cohesive states such as the United Kingdom.

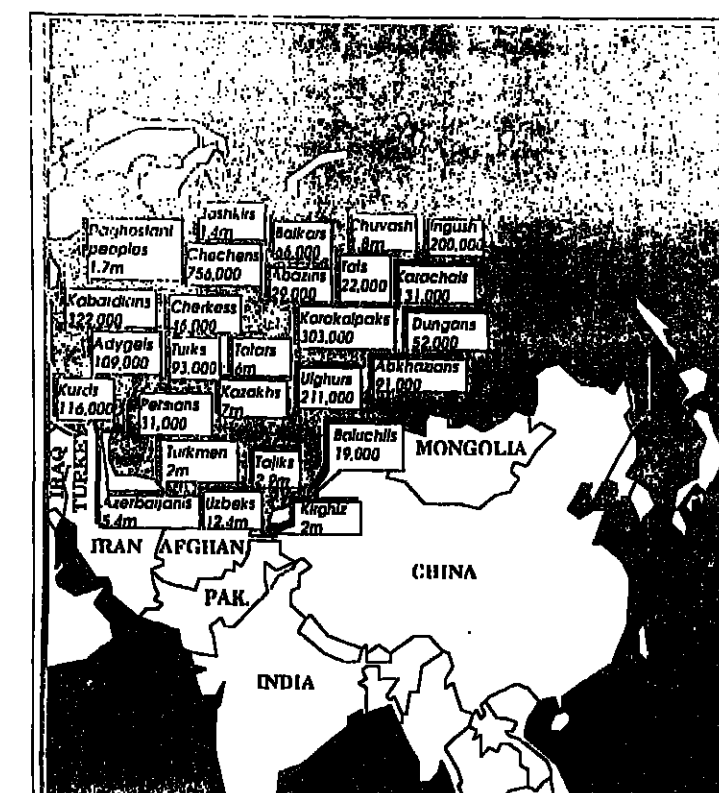
One major question facing each of the primary players is whether the legitimate drive towards independence is soon to become a striving for separatism and whether the lure of a separate identity now threatens to inspire not only the former autonomous regions and republics of the USSR but also the communities across established borders. In other words, is the deceased Soviet Union about to exact its revenge from the grave?

The spectre of "Greater Turkey" looms large in this new firmament. Professor Vitalij Naumkin, former head of the Arabic Department at Moscow State University who now heads the Russian Center for Strategic Research and International Studies, said in London recently that some Turkish officials firmly believe that the former southern Soviet republics are essentially populated by Turkic peoples who have failed to buckle under the weight of three generations of Bolshevism. Turkey, he believes, may be unwilling or unable to bankroll the rebuilding of Central Asia but is unlikely to abandon what it considers to be a natural cultural extension of the Anatolian heartland.

Constitutionally secular and politically West-oriented, Turkey is by far the most attractive model for the area. Even the Azers, the only major Shiite community in the former Soviet Union, despite their confessional relations with Iran, have followed the Turkish path of secularization. It is hardly surprising that the idea of a Greater Turkic Union — a union of all Turkic peoples, including non-Muslims, Christians and Lamaists in Siberia, has gradually taken hold in the area. Ironically it has found support not only in Turkey but also in the Arab states anxious to thwart Iranian attempts to spread the influence of the Islamic Republic.

## In Central Asia, stirrings of a new 'Great Game'

The emergence of independent states in Central Asia has set in motion a process of changing alliances in the manner of The Great Game that the former imperialist powers, Britain and Russia, played over the heads of millions of inhabitants about a century ago.



Post-USSR Central Asia

Academic File

In an effort to bind the new independent states into a community, Turkey has been encouraging them to replace the Cyrillic script with Latin rather than Arabic script — despite strong local pressures to opt for the latter. In a notable compromise the Uzbekistan government has decided to keep the Cyrillic alphabet in everyday use but introduce the Arabic script as well as the language in all the schools.

On the other hand, Tajikistan is about to adopt the Arabic script precisely because it is afraid of being submerged in a Turkic world. Though there is a split between its pro-communist north and an Islamic south, Tajikistan has a weak democratic tradition and a strong Islamic political establishment and, in the view of Naumkin, this is most vulnerable to a fundamentalist takeover. Because of the ethnic affinity of the Tajiks to the Iranians and their religious orientation, if an Islamic state does emerge in Tajikistan, it would inevitably be pro-Iranian.

Iran itself however has to cope with a large (30 per cent) Azeri minority and thus has an interest in preventing a resurgence of Azeri nationalism that leads to a spillover of separatist trends in its own Azerbaijan. Furthermore, despite its Islamic commitments, Iran cannot ignore its own influential and rich Armenian community and so far has been seen performing a balancing act keeping on the good side of Azerbaijan but also providing technical assistance to Armenia.

For the pragmatists in the Iranian leadership, relations with Christian states like Armenia are equally important as they signify, particularly for the West, that narrow-minded Islamism has no place in the new Iran. Iran is active also in Turkmenia, where

dent Tajikistan, for example, is strategically important not only for Iran but also for Afghanistan where the northern region is dominated by Tajik Mujahideen, mainly under the command of Ahmed Shah Massoud. The Afghan Tajiks enjoy very special affinity with communities in southern Tajikistan. Close aides to Massoud have been heard saying: Why not divide Afghanistan to establish a Greater Tajikistan?

As to the Saudi role, Naumkin believes that the kingdom's star may have dipped somewhat in the area in the wake of the Gulf War, which brought the conservative Arab countries into a close alliance with the West. Whilst, he says, some Tajik groups have Wahabi ties and a Wahabi movement exists in the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan, on the whole Central Asian politicians have been very critical of Saudi policies.

The Saudi role in the area so far has consisted mostly of funding new mosques. According to the Russians, however, Islam increasingly is at the center of regional politics and a tool in the foreign policy and foreign aid objectives of Central Asian leaders.

On the one hand, he says, Islam is used by the regional leaders unabashedly to obtain financial support from abroad while, on the other, it is the vehicle for political ideologies. Naumkin also points out a common error in Western readings of the Central Asian situation. It is the mistake, he says, of seeing a revival of Islamic culture as a re-

surgence of a political movement.

The one country seldom mentioned as an actor in the new 'Great Game', which nonetheless is very active in Central Asia, is Pakistan. It would be interesting to see whether the recent revelation about Pakistan's nuclear progress — for a decade hardly a secret to any diligent observer — have anything to do with the impending visit to New Delhi by the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin. Pakistan's nuclear capability, however, will strengthen the hand of those around President Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan who want to keep, rather than scrap, the strategic nuclear missiles inherited from the USSR.

That the newly emergent Central Asia is destined to play a role not only vis-a-vis South Asia and the Gulf but also in relation to China was illustrated recently. When Nazarbaev was asked during a visit to London whether there was a risk of separatist feelings in his country spilling into China, splitting Sinkiang (with its Kazakhs and Uyghurs) from Beijing, he diplomatically replied that he wants good relations both with Beijing and the Sinkiang.

China has a special interest in keeping on good terms with Kazakhstan and, with that in view, relations between the two countries have improved. In some places along the frontier there is a very active trade and free movement of people.

But China, which liberalized its economy somewhat but remains a largely authoritarian political entity, is not regarded as a credible model for reforms in Central Asia. Nevertheless, as the new game is set in the region, China is certain to emerge as one of the key players in it and eager not to be outdone by other contenders in the field. ■

Academic File  
Mariusz Kuklinski is a writer and researcher based in London

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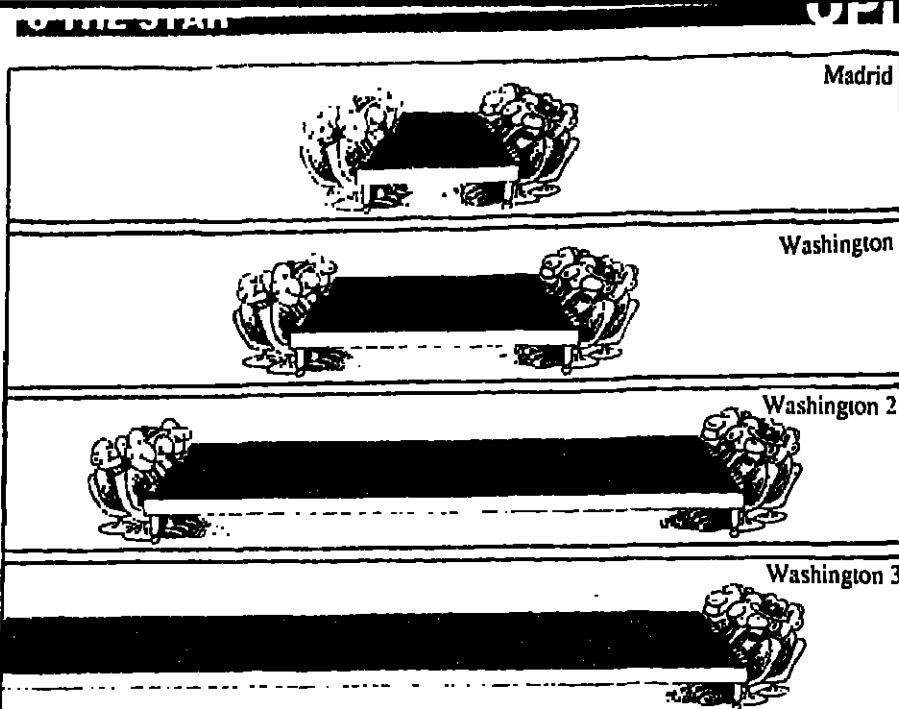
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## Our Say...

### Western leaders should listen

THE VISIT by His Majesty King Hussein to the United States and other Western capitals is an important one to Jordan, the Arabs and the peace process. It is the first visit by the King to the United States since the Gulf crisis. When the King saw President George Bush last, it was to promote a peaceful solution to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. The King's efforts did not succeed and the result was a devastating war that destroyed Iraq and Kuwait and fractured inter-Arab relations. The war also heralded the downfall of the Soviet empire and the rise of a plethora of new republics in the former USSR. The balance of global power has changed and the Arab world, like most other regions of the world, has had to go through difficult times and adapt to the new geo-political realities.

Jordan was no exception. But it is probably because of King Hussein's farsightedness that Jordan managed to survive the ordeal of the last two years, but not without a price. Jordan's economy was dealt a severe set back. Arab assistance to Jordan was cut in punishment for its moderate and rational position and thousands of its subjects were badly treated and expelled from Kuwait as a result.

It took patience and vision to steer the country through these and other difficult challenges. Today Jordan stands at the forefront of the peace process. It is again playing a vital role in maintaining the momentum and drive of the peace negotiations, in spite of the obstacles created by Israel.

The King's meeting in Washington with President Bush should help clear the air between Jordan and the United States. It should also pave the way for further understanding on the part of the Bush administration of the need for peace in the region. While this is an election year for Mr Bush, King Hussein will repeat the message to American officials and representatives that peace in the Middle East and the applicability of UN Security Council resolutions on Israel's occupation of Arab lands must be viewed in their entirety as the basis for long-term stability and security in this part of the world.

The King will be able to exchange views with President Bush on what has been achieved so far in the peace negotiations. It is hoped that the King will be able to receive a firm commitment from the Bush administration towards breaking the current deadlock in negotiations and moving the parties into discussing substantial issues.

The King's visit is also important from a wider Arab perspective. Jordan has always contributed to the understanding of Western leaders about the Middle East, its politics and the forces of change that are shaping it. In his meetings with French and German leaders, the King will be able to engage these countries further in the development of the region. His calls should echo throughout these capitals. Peace in the Middle East alone will not be enough to create stability and security. There has to be serious foreign involvement in the economic development of the region and in restructuring the economies of its countries.

While the Gulf crisis may have launched the Middle East peace process into existence, nothing can sustain it but the determination of the region's leaders. King Hussein has shown Jordan's commitment to peace, and to working with others to attain it. But if the world loses interest in the region's prospects and turns to other issues, the fires of extremism could soon return. King Hussein has something to say to Western leaders. We hope they will listen and act accordingly. ■

## US census worker is punished for estimating Iraqi death toll

By Barton Gellman

LATE LAST fall, the Census Bureau assigned a 29-year-old demographer to update the government's population estimate for Iraq. Beth Osborne Daponte quickly found herself drawn into one of the most sensitive political questions of the Gulf War.

How many Iraqis died during the war and its aftermath? The answer, officially taboo in the Bush administration, was indispensable to Daponte's calculations. In January, when a reporter asked for her estimates, she told him: 86,194 men, 39,612 women and 32,195 children died at the hands of the American-led coalition forces, during the domestic rebellions that followed, and from post-war deprivation.

Last week, after weeks of turmoil during which she was removed from the Iraqi project and her files disappeared from her desk, Daponte was told she is to be fired. Barbara Boyle Torrey, her boss at the bureau's Center for International Research, wrote that Daponte's report included "false information" and demonstrated "untrustworthiness or unreliability." She also accused Daponte of refusing to cooperate with a security clearance investigation.

The White House and Pentagon consistently have sought to suppress discussion of Iraqi casualties, directing analysts and military officers not to provide estimates or professional judgments. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said the day the war ended that "we have no way of knowing precisely how many casualties occurred" during the fighting itself, and predicted that "we may never know."

"I think that Beth is collateral damage in the government's campaign to avoid discussing the question of Iraqi casualties," said William Arkin, a former intelligence officer who now does military analysis for Greenpeace. "I think this is an ugly case of retribution."

Frank Hobbs, Daponte's immediate superior, declined to comment. Karen Wheelers, a bureau spokeswoman, said retribution "was not the reason" for Daponte's removal but that she could not discuss the case without violating Daponte's privacy. "Any of us, when we're in trouble, we don't want to look at ourselves as the reason for our trouble," Wheelers said. "That's just human nature."

Daponte, a GS-11 employee, has said she is seeking advice from the American Civil Liberties Union and private lawyers. An aide to Rep. Tom Sawyer (D-Ohio), who chairs a House subcommittee that oversees the census, said Sawyer had been following Daponte's case and planned to investigate her firing. "Certainly if what she is alleging is true, it would be enormously disturbing," the aide said.

Daponte's firing is based officially almost entirely on a disagreement between the demographer and retired Army Colonel Trevor Dupuy, a military historian she interviewed as part of her march. Dupuy told census officials, and has confirmed in an interview, that he did not agree with assumptions about civilian deaths that Daponte attributed to him.

Daponte, who showed her hand-written notes of the conversation to a reporter, said that if she misrepresented Dupuy, it was an honest mistake. Dupuy said in the interview that he had "no basis" to believe Daponte had "deliberately distorted what I said."

But in the notice of termination, Torrey



described Daponte's reliance on "false information" as "a major violation of trust, for which removal is the only effective sanction."

Experts in federal employment law said it was highly unusual for the government to fire an employee in these circumstances without trying to resolve the discrepancy between Daponte and Dupuy. "She's not the first federal employee to make a mistake, if that's what occurred, and not everybody who makes a mistake gets fired," said Joseph Sellers of the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. "It smacks of either retaliation or a whistle-blower type of phenomenon, where a person discloses something an agency would prefer not to be aired publicly."

Daponte had no access to classified information in preparing her study. She based it instead on a review of literature on casualty modeling and on the Gulf War. Her estimates — a total of 158,000 Iraqi dead, including 40,000 direct military deaths, 13,000 immediate civilian deaths, 35,000 post-war deaths in the Shiite and Kurdish rebellions, and 70,000 deaths due to the public health consequences of wartime damage to electricity and sewage treatment plants — fall generally within the middle range of other expert calculations.

The information Daponte gave to Robert Burns, an Associated Press reporter who called her in January, would have been available to anyone who came to her office and asked for the Iraqi folder for the "World Population 1992" handbook. Daponte said the file disappeared from her desk shortly after Burns's story appeared in The Washington Post and is still missing.

Hobbs and another supervisor later re-wrote and released Daponte's report, reducing the number of direct, wartime civilian deaths from 13,000 to 5,000 and eliminating a Daponte chart breaking down the figures for men, women and children.

"I think it's rather scary that if an employee releases public information to the public, they can get fired for it," Daponte said. "My salary had been paid by tax dollars. I thought the public was entitled to know what we had come up with."

Washington Post

12 MARCH 1992

PERISCOPE

THE STAR 9

## The shaky prospects for peace in the Middle East

By Roger Matthews

TALKING OF peace while watching the seeds of conflict grow is a Middle East trait that seems to survive even the worst conflicts.

A year ago, when small, rich Kuwait was liberated, the Middle East looked less militarily threatening than it had for decades and George Bush seemed guaranteed a second presidential term. Twelve months on, there are still peace talks on the agenda. But as the peace process drags on, the guns are firing again and the achievements of the Gulf War have become much less obvious for the Middle East in general and Mr Bush in particular.

The defeat of Iraqi forces in Kuwait had offered the region much more than just the chance to rid itself of tyrants, while Mr Bush had the opportunity to capitalize on the triumph of becoming the US leader who presided over the joint burial of communism and the bitter memory of Vietnam. Logic alone suggested that after such a huge international effort, the Middle East would not be allowed to fester and erupt in the same way again.

There were positive changes. For the first time in its post-colonial history, the Middle East was demonstrably free from superpower rivalry. Israel had been persuaded to exercise wholly uncharacteristic military restraint and there was talk in Western capitals of moving towards a resolution of some of the Middle East's worst political injustices and economic disparities. If there was to be a new Middle East order, Mr Bush and James Baker, the secretary of state, were uniquely placed to be both architects and guarantors.

Those hopes have dissipated with alarming speed. After the events of the past weeks, not least in New Hampshire, the defeated President Saddam Hussein is crowing about being more secure in Baghdad than the victorious Mr Bush is in Washington. Israel's assassination of Sheikh Abbas Musawi, the Shia leader in southern Lebanon, and his family has inflamed not just the local community but sent a message to Muslim communities throughout the Middle East.

Israeli tanks have subsequently brushed aside UN peace keeping forces and punched deeper into southern Lebanon in what is certain to be another doomed attempt to impose political compliance through military punishment. The US, meanwhile, is still trumpeting its pursuit of Saddam Hussein, is threatening tougher action against Libya and has supported the cancellation of elections in Algeria.

Taken individually, each event has its particular motivation. Taken severally, it is small wonder that the region's radicals think they are poised to claw back much of the ground conceded to the US and the more moderate Arab regimes at the time of the Gulf War. They argued then that the US viewed the Gulf conflict primarily as an opportunity to crush Iraq and to ensure that a pliant Saudi Arabia would ensure cheap long-term oil supplies. They insisted that beyond the borders of Israel, Mr Bush cared little for the people of the region, would make scant efforts to assist domestic victims of Iraq's aggression and never intended to offer more than a token effort to resolve the Palestinian issue.

The extremist propaganda image of Israel and the US jointly beating their Arab opponents into submission remains more potency among some populations than anything which can be advanced by America's friends in support of their relationship.

Against this background, Palestinians, Syrians, Jordanians, Lebanese and Israelis



continue to gather for peace negotiations which, as the participants are all too well aware, look increasingly at odds with the political mood of the Middle East.

The peace process, launched in Madrid at the end of last October, reflected primarily the changed strategic circumstances of the participating nations. The collapse of the Soviet Union had left the Palestinians and Israel's Arab opponents without a sponsor or protector. President Hafez Al Assad of Syria, hitherto Israel's most durable enemy, saw a compensating degree of protection by acceding to US requests and agreed to negotiate, pulling Lebanon with him.

Yitzhak Shamir, Israel's prime minister, came with even greater reluctance, stressing that Israel would not concede an inch more of the land it had occupied since 1967 and could offer nothing other than peace in return for peace. To reinforce that assertion, Israel accelerated its settlement building program in the occupied territories and saw nothing contradictory in simultaneously asking the US to guarantee loans of \$10 billion needed to settle immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

After all this, Israel still suffers a credibility gap. Its problem is that the US and other Western governments prefer to interpret Mr Shamir's most headline statements as negotiating positions rather than simple statements of conviction. When Mr Shamir says that Jews must forever have the right to settle in the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) it should be supposed he believes that as fervently as he does in a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty.

There is nothing contradictory for Mr

*At grass roots, the political ground is being more surely prepared for extremism than it is for the more pragmatic realism that seemed possible a year ago.*

Shamir in sending tanks into southern Lebanon while protesting a determination to secure peace. Before him, Menachem Begin, the former Likud prime minister who died this week, ordered a far larger invasion of Lebanon in 1978, only a few months after President Anwar Sadat of Egypt opened prospects for peace by becoming the first Arab leader to visit Israel.

These attitudes do, however, pose problems for the Bush administration. Mr Shamir was recently re-elected as leader of his Likud Party and will go into the June general election as the favorite to win. If

he is successful there is no justification for Arab governments to expect anything more than the most modest flexibility in Likud policy. A victory for Yitzhak Rabin, newly returned to lead the opposition Labor Party, would, on the other hand, open the way to the offer of some form of autonomy for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, although Mr Rabin's chances of winning depend on him appearing to the electorate to be almost as tough as Mr Shamir. If the election result is indecisive, as it often has been in the past, the two men would probably work together in a national unity government.

A politically astute Mr Shamir does, however, have the opportunity to rob Mr Rabin of some of his electoral appeal. He can put on the table in Washington the framework of an autonomy agreement for the Palestinians along the lines of the Camp David accords reached during the negotiations with President Sadat in 1978. This will simultaneously improve relations with the US. It will not answer Palestinian aspirations for self-determination, but it would assist the negotiating teams by indicating there was some longer-term purpose to the peace process.

But Mr Shamir has contributed additionally to the pressures which will eventually provoke the collapse of the peace process, by instructing the Israeli team in Washington to avoid any proposals on substantive issues. He knows the Arab delegations must be getting near the brink. Syria and Lebanon boycotted the multilateral phase of the process in Moscow earlier this month in protest at Israel's refusal to concede the principle of exchanging territory for peace.

With the alarm bells ringing again in Damascus over Israel's latest incursion into Lebanon, President Assad must be finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile participating in the peace talks. There are similar tensions in the Palestinian camp.

They would, of course, rather stay within the process. To pull out serves not just Israel's hawks but extremists throughout the Arab world. But there comes a point when the domestic dangers may be judged to be greater than the international blame that would attach to withdrawal.

Historically, it has been easier in the Arab world to whip up and sustain popular support through anti-Israeli and anti-American rhetoric than through any other form of political agitation.

The Gulf War added to the personal, political and economic misery of tens of millions of people in the region. That misery continues and is growing. At grass roots, the political ground is being more surely prepared for extremism than it is for the more pragmatic realism that seemed possible a year ago. ■

Financial Times

## Regional ROUND-UP

AMMAN — King Hussein began a five-country tour on Sunday. The King visited Iceland where he conferred with the country's president and prime minister. He also visited Canada. In the United States, the King will meet Thursday with US President George Bush for the first time since August 1990. The King is expected to press president Bush for a more active American role in the Arab-Israeli peace talks. On his way back, the King will visit France and Germany and confer with the countries' leaders.

ANKARA — Turkey's intelligence chief has said rebel Kurds fighting for independence will launch an uprising in the Middle of this month to coincide with Turkish new year celebrations. The Kurdish Workers Party has vowed to launch a spring offensive and full-scale popular uprising in the southeast.

ANKARA — An Israeli diplomat was killed Saturday in the Turkish capital by a car bomb blast. Three people were wounded. Two Islamic groups claimed responsibility for the attack, which comes two weeks after Israel's killing of Lebanese Shiite leader Abbas Musawi.

AMMAN — King Hussein met Iraqi vice-premier Tarek Aziz Saturday and had talks with him on issues of mutual interest. Mr Aziz arrived in Amman for a visit en route to New York to present his country's reply to UN charges that it is violating Gulf War cease-fire terms. He will also push for the lifting of international sanctions against Iraq. Meanwhile, the UN sanctions committee has refused on Iraqi request for a daily flight by Iraq passenger planes between Baghdad and Amman. It also refused another request that an Iraqi Boeing 727 be allowed to be returned for use in flights between Baghdad and Basra.

WASHINGTON — Syria's chief negotiator at the Mideast peace talks has said Israel could have peace with the Arabs if it made a commitment to give up all the land it seized in the 1967 war. Muwaffaq Al Aharat told reporters in Washington that the Arabs want to end the conflict with Israel.

ALGIERS — The banned Islamic Salvation Front warned against the outbreak of civil war in Algeria after its dissolution by the authorities. It said the fake calm prevailing could be a prelude to civil strife.

TEL AVIV — Former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin died Monday at the age of 79. As prime minister, Begin signed the separate peace treaty with Egypt in 1979 brokered by former US President Jimmy Carter. Begin ordered the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 and the invasion of Lebanon in 1982. During the British mandate over Palestine, Begin led a terrorist group and was wanted for murder by the British authorities.

CAIRO — Police have arrested 67 alleged Muslim extremists including one of the men who shot dead a police officer in southern Egypt this week, a security source has said. Egyptian sources also disclosed the uncovering of a plot to overthrow the Egyptian leadership on Monday. The sources said the plotters, including army officers, received financial backing from Iran and Iraq. A number of arrests have been made.

NOUACKCHOTT — President Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmad Taya's party scored a majority in Mauritania's parliamentary elections. Political analysts said an opposition boycott, apathy and the fast month of Ramadan has kept turnout low in the first round of voting.

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## Ramadan in Pakistan:

# A month of fasting and praying, charity and sharing

By Hind-Lara Mango  
Special To The Star

THE HOLY month of Ramadan is celebrated with traditional reverence and fervor in Pakistan. Being a Muslim country, Pakistan views this month with great sanctity and as one that teaches mental and physical self control. "This month is for fasting and praying, for charity and sharing," said Brazilian-born Cristina Afridi, wife of the Pakistani ambassador to Jordan. She said that the atmosphere in Ramadan is festive and that time is spent in prayer and in reciting the Quran. Charity is especially emphasized during this time, as it is a month in which to empathize with the less fortunate.

Ramadan preparations in Pakistan are left to the womenfolk; they prepare for both the *Schri* (the meal before sunrise) and the *Iftar*. For *Schri* Pakistanis eat *Paratha*, a cake of flour fried in butter or oil. It is eaten with yogurt, but some curries are served as well. The younger generation, according to Mrs Afridi, prefers bread to the *Paratha*.

The fast is broken with dates, as is the case in Jordan. This is followed by light snacks such as *Samosas*, *Pakoras* and *Dahi Bhale* (yogurt served with something similar to *kubbeh*). Tea is also on the menu. Muslims then go to pray and are ready to have their proper *Iftar* dinner. Unlike night life in Egypt during Ramadan, where everyone stays up late, Pakistanis prefer to have an early night so as to wake up in time for the



Cristina Afridi: Enjoying the atmosphere of Ramadan

last call to eat.

The festival of *Eid* which occurs at the end of the holy month of Ramadan is seen as a time for visiting family and friends. Similar to the Jordanian tradition, people wear new outfits to mark the occasion. Children run around in bright clothes, adding a glow to the feast. In cities and villages *Eid Melas* are held, where people throng to these 'fairs' for entertainment. "The idea behind the *Eid Mela* is that it is similar to a fun fair where food is also available," elaborated Mrs Afridi.

A typical Pakistani dish to be eaten at this time of the year is the *Iftar* snack *Pakoras*. To make it you will need to gather the following ingredients:

One cup of gram flour (available in Amman, but if it cannot be found powdered chick peas are a good alternative)

One large onion  
Two small green chillies  
A few curry leaves  
Salt to taste  
Oil for frying  
One teaspoon baking powder  
Curry leaves (Optional)

Method: Chop onion, chillies and curry leaves finely. Mix all ingredients together, adding a little water to obtain a thick batter. Heat the oil and pour the batter into the oil from a spoon the size of an almond. Deep fry until brown. Serve hot with chutney and sauce. ■

## RAMADAN REFLECTIONS

### The social and economic significance of Ramadan

By Ahmad Al-Anani

RAMADAN FASTING is not, in fact, the most important pillar of the Islamic faith. The five principal pillars of Islam start in order of merit, by admittance that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger. The five daily prayers constitute the second pillar and *Zakat*, the Islamic Social Welfare tax, the third. This is an obligatory tax varying from a rate of 2.5 percent of the capital value exceeding a minimum income freed from *Zakat*, to 10 percent in certain incomes where the effort of man in money-making is less strenuous. Then comes Ramadan fasting as the fourth pillar. This by no means denotes that any of these pillars is less vital than others, because with pilgrimage as the fifth pillar the structure of faith is completed and perfected.

In the socio-economic life of Muslims, Ramadan fasting and *Zakat* have special significance. As we know, fasting is obligatory except for the sick and the old-aged, pregnant or feeding mothers and hard-working laborers who, without their wages, may starve. The fact that no physically capable Muslim is exempt from fasting is a knock on the doors of the rich to remind them what hunger and poverty mean. Hence it is that Ramadan is a month of bounty and happiness to the poor.

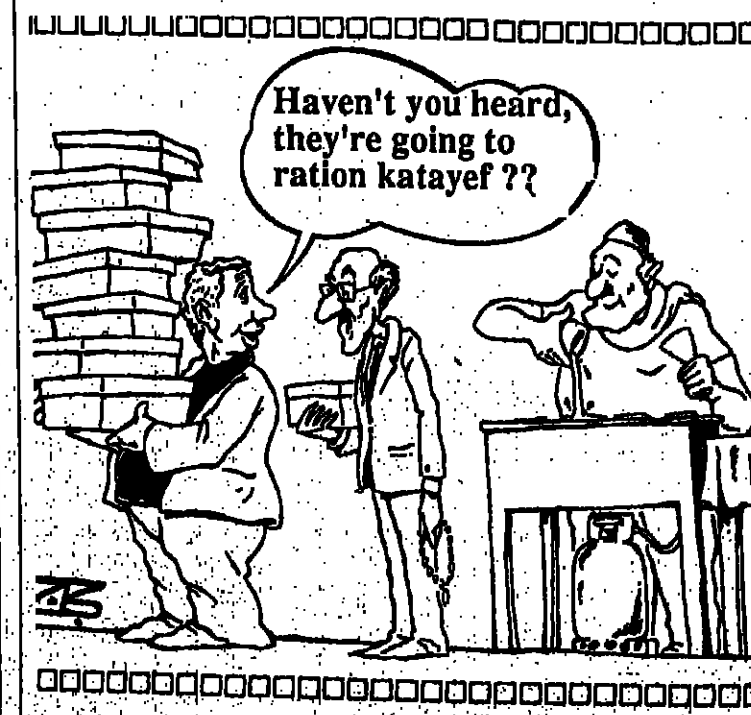
Besides their preference to pay their annual religious tax of *Zakat* in Ramadan, the rich, who turn their attention while fasting towards the orders and advice in the Quran and the *Sunna* (life and traditions of Prophet Muhammad), consequently compete for voluntary financial sacrifices both in money and in kind.

No account can do justice to the Quranic campaign for promulgation of assistance to the poor, the needy, the indebted, the wretched, orphans, poor students studying abroad and needy wayfarers. The spirit of Islam is antagonistic to money hoarding, excessive possession and to exaggerated engagement in worldly gains.

While taking great care to preserve economic incentives and private enterprises and free market dealings, a good Muslim should be just as ready to spend in all ways of charity. It is related that Prophet Muhammad, who didn't own a single coin on his death, had wished to possess as much gold as the weight of the Uhud mountain so as to spend it in ways that would satisfy God.

Muslims are earnestly called upon "to lend" to Allah as much as they can, because it is "Allah that takes charities" and he shall repay them in this world and in the after-life. The *Zakat* is enough in itself to satisfy the needs of all who deserve help in Islamic societies. The fact that *Zakat* and alms are kinds of worship in Islam greatly enhances social strength in Islamic societies. There is quite a difference between the extension of help as a duty to Allah and a tax imposed by a human authority. Good Muslims everywhere in the world (meaning really enlightened Muslims), far from concealing any due payments as *Zakat* offer more than is due on them lest by any shortage they incur Allah's anger. *Zakat* brings together the human hearts of both the "haves" and the "have nots", the donors and the receivers. It heals grudges in the hearts of the needy and breaks the over-confidence and vanity in the proud hearts of the rich.

No Muslim is encouraged to accept *Zakat* or charity money so long as he can resist adversity and find any means whatsoever to acquire subsistence. Muslims are encouraged to have the upper hand of being givers rather than being given. Hence comes the fact that the best reward for *Zakat* goes to those who investigate and discover those who deserve *Zakat* but succeed in concealing themselves. These people should be assisted in absolute privacy and secrecy. Islam is greatly concerned with keeping the dignity of each citizen. ■



# Le Jourdain

## Section française du Star

Du 16 au 29 mars au CCF

## Une exposition pour préserver Pétra!

Des institutions jordaniennes et des entreprises françaises unissent leurs forces. Une synergie pour une noble cause, "la sauvegarde du site de Pétra"



Pétra sous la neige

Photo G. B.

"LA VILLE de Pétra, c'est l'un des plus beaux sites touristiques de la région. Les institutions concernées devaient le protéger contre les crues dévastatrices des eaux du Wadi Moussa et des régions avoisinantes, qui se renouvellent à l'entrée du Siq et qui entraînent tout sur leur passage" affirme Mohammed Al Nawalla, un lecteur du journal *Al Rai* (29 février).

Il demande que "le ministère du Tourisme construise des barages pour protéger la cité". Cette lettre ouverte et peut-être faussement naïve, arrive à point nommé. Elle fait figure d'aiguillon, au moment où une synergie entre institutions jordaniennes et françaises semble prendre forme.

Deux tragiques Inondations Le 16 mars, à 19h30, au Centre culturel français d'Amman, le Prince Héritier Hassan, va inaugurer une exposition, organisée par l'Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche-Orient (IFAPO). Le thème: "La sauvegarde de Pétra".

Constata de départ: deux inondations tragiques. En 1963, le canal du Siq étant bouché, le Wadi Moussa a retrouvé son cours normal. Résultat: les inondations ont tué 23 touristes français. Un très mauvais souvenir. Une brève dans le journal "Al Manar" de l'époque. En mars 1991, après avoir dévasté le village moderne, les eaux passent par dessus le barrage - qui détourne le Wadi Moussa dans le Siq - emportent un pont, et causent de nombreux dégâts sur le site de Pétra.

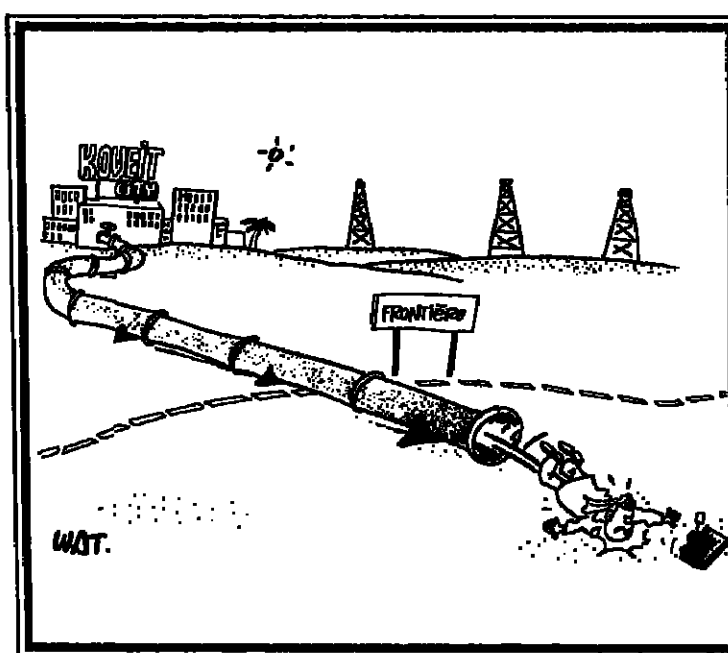
Pourquoi subir sans arrêt des crues, pourquoi risquer de perdre des vies humaines et de voir le site endommagé? affirme Jacques Selgne, responsable de l'antenne d'Amman de l'IFAPO. Il ajoute: "Nous sommes dans un pays désertique, il faut aussi trouver une solution pour régler en partie le problème de l'eau".

C'est l'électricité de France (EDF), qui en novembre dernier lance l'idée de cette exposition. A ce moment là, Pierre Deléle, ingénieur en géologie pour la compagnie française est à Pétra. Accompagné de deux chercheurs du CNRS, il étudie "l'altération de la roche" sur le monument "Palace Tomb". Verdict du spécialiste: "La façade du tombeau à étages est relativement altérée, mais les endroits les plus fragiles sont ceux qui touchent le sol. Si nous étions en France, avec le gel, il n'y aurait plus de pari à Pétra". Ces propos datent de novembre dernier. Ils prennent tout leur sens, après les cinq tempêtes de neige consécutives qui viennent de frapper la Jordanie.

La section "mécénat technologique" d'EDF, qui travaille déjà sur les pyramides d'Égypte ou sur l'épave du Titanic se consacre maintenant à un nouveau gros dossier: Pétra. La suite de leur mission de novembre dernier consiste à réaliser une étude hydro-géologique de la zone. "Il faut traiter le mal le plus haut possible, il faut à tout prix empêcher la crue avant qu'elle se forme", affirme Jacques Selgne de l'IFAPO, mais il n'est pas sûr que l'on puisse faire des retenues d'eau sur des grès. C'est pour cela qu'une telle étude est indispensable.

Un autre partenaire français, et de taille, est venu se greffer sur le projet. Il s'agit de "Spot-images". Leur concours devrait être précieux pour "comprendre le fonctionnement du Wadi Moussa". "Spot-images" va fournir des photos-satellite, en trois

Suite à la page 12



Un diplomate israélien a été tué samedi après midi à Ankara dans un attentat à la voiture piégée. Trois factions fondamentalistes islamiques ont revendiqué l'attentat. L'organisation de la vengeance islamique qui prétend venger le Cheikh Abbas Moussaoui, le Hezbollah et le Jihad Islamique.

## Relax... Jordanie... Relax... Jordanie

VOYAGE - Le roi Hussein de Jordanie, a suggéré lundi en Islande, que ce pays soit peut-être une prochaine terre d'accueil pour la suite des pourparlers entre Arabes et Israéliens. "Si les négociations deviennent très tendues, ce pourrait être un endroit pour calmer le jeu" a répondu le Premier ministre islandais. Le roi Hussein devait ensuite se rendre aux Canadas, aux Etats-Unis ou France et en Allemagne.

AMNISTIE - Le roi Hussein a signé samedi dernier une amnistie partielle, réduisant de moitié la durée d'emprisonnement de près de 600 détenus, condamnés pour des infractions ou délits. Cette mesure devait entrer en vigueur à partir de dimanche. Les prisonniers condamnés pour crimes ne bénéficient pas de cette mesure de clémence. La dernière amnistie royale remonte au 16 février 1990.

PAIX - Le prochain round des pourparlers de paix arabo-israéliens aura lieu "très probablement le mois prochain à Washington" a affirmé dimanche à Amman Abdel Salam Al-Majali. Le chef de la délégation jordanienne a également rejeté sur Israël la responsabilité de l'échec des dernières réunions. L'Etat hébreu refuse toujours de discuter les questions des implantations dans les Territoires-occupés et de la résolution 242 des Nations Unies.

SUSPECT - La Jordanie veut demander son aide au Liban pour faciliter l'extradition vers la Jordanie du suspect numéro un du meurtre en 1971 du Premier ministre jordanien de l'époque, Wasfi Tell. Vendredi dernier, ce Palestinien de 48 ans a été confié au Liban par les autorités suédoises. "Nous attendons toujours son retour; nous faisons de notre mieux pour le ramener en Jordanie" a affirmé un secrétaire du ministère des Affaires étrangères.

## A VOIR...

CONFERENCE - "Architectures profanes et religieuses en terre d'islam" par Noël Favrelière, à 16h00 mercredi 11 mars au Centre culturel français.

CINEMA - Lundi 16 mars à 20h00 au CCF, "Une si jolie petite plage" (1949), de Yves Allégret, avec Gérard Philippe et Madeleine Robinson. Un Orphelin retourne à l'auberge où il fut employé et maltraité par la patronne.

ROCHES - "Les roches sont-elles vivantes à l'échelle historique". C'est le thème de la Conférence de M. Bernard Hugué, professeur de géologie à l'Université de Nancy. 1. Mercredi 17 à 16h00 au CCF.

## Around the world with PARKER

### A general knowledge Ramadan quiz

WEEK 2  
To participate send in this slip after filling in the appropriate answers:

Answers:  
1:  
2:  
3:  
4:

Name:  
Address:

Telephone number:

Questions/Week 2:

- 1- Where would you find the Bridge of Eggs?
- 2- Where is the lowest point in the world?
- 3- What is the name of the world's largest desert?
- 4- Name the one state in the United States that is named after a former president.

### Win Weekly Prizes!

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De Koweït à Amman

## Chronique d'une expulsion ordinaire

Après trente-et-une années passées au Koweït, Walid Abou Bakr, Palestinien, ex-rédacteur-en-chef des pages culturelles d'un grand quotidien vient à peine d'être expulsé. Aujourd'hui à Amman, il vit séparé de sa famille

SAMEDI 15 février, 14h30, domicile de Walid Abou Bakr à Koweït City. Walid décroche. Dix minutes plus tard, il se retrouve dans les bureaux de la police koweïtienne. Le cauchemar de Walid s'appelle Mazen. Il se souvient parfaitement de son nom. Comment l'oublier? C'est cet homme poli, de corpulence moyenne qui le reçoit. "Nous vous connaissons très bien, dit-il sur un ton courtois, malgré tout, nous ne voulons plus de vous au Koweït. Vous devez quitter le pays dans les sept jours". Le choc. Walid réagit et demande un sursis d'une semaine. Accordé. Mazen prend le passeport de Walid et donne un coup de tampon. La date de départ est fixée : 29 février.

Cette scène va briser la vie de ce Palestinien de 54 ans, ex-rédacteur-en-chef d'un supplément culturel d'un grand quotidien koweïtien, Al Qabas. Mais il n'a pas encore réalisé. D'abord, Walid décide de ne pas rompre avec la vie koweïtienne. Comme si de rien n'était.

Tous les jours, il se rend au siège d'Al Qabas. Jusqu'au 28 au soir. Au bureau, ses collègues tentent de comprendre. De savoir. "Beaucoup ont essayé, sans résultat", affirme Walid Abou Bakr. Le ministre de l'Information koweïtien, qui vient lui rendre visite, n'était, paraît-il, pas au courant. Il promet à son ami de faire le maximum. Il ne donnera plus de nouvelles. "Au cours de cette période, j'étais très en colère" affirme Walid Abou Bakr.

## Samedis noirs

Samedi est désormais jour maudit dans la vie de Walid. Il se souvient du coup de téléphone. Samedi 29, 14h30, Walid Abou Bakr est bien loin de l'Emirat des Al-Sabah, ex-patrié pour Palestinien diplômé. Il vient à peine d'arriver au Queen Alia International Airport d'Amman, par un vol régulier d'Egypt Air. Quelques amis l'attendent. Direction l'hôtel de luxe Philadelphia, au centre ville d'Amman.

Walid réserve deux chambres, la 421 et la 422. Le temps de se retourner. L'une de ses filles, Nancy, 24 ans, brune aux cheveux longs vit à Amman, où elle



Le désespoir de Walid Abou Bakr

vient à peine de terminer ses études d'architecture : "J'ai appris la nouvelle en appelant au Koweït, à la maison de mon père. A ce moment là, j'ai su qu'il était en Jordanie. J'étais content, car je ne l'avais pas vu depuis deux ans. Elle disposait d'informations incomplètes : "Je pensais qu'il était en visite, qu'il disposait encore d'un Visa de résident au Koweït..."

Le lendemain, Nancy vient habiter à l'hôtel avec son exil de

encore revenu : "Quand j'ai entendu sa voix au téléphone m'annoncer cette expulsion, je n'en croyais pas mes oreilles". Walid Abou Bakr se sent mal à l'aise. Il éprouve le besoin de se justifier : "Pendant la guerre, je n'ai pas collaboré avec les Irakiens, j'avais des milliers d'amis au Koweït, j'étais l'un des premiers à vouloir combler le fossé entre les Palestiniens et les Koweïtiens". Il évoque son style de vie passé : "Je connaissais beaucoup

"C'est la destruction d'une famille!" lance l'ami de Walid. Il ajoute : "Abou Bakr et son épouse étaient des symboles pour l'harmonie entre les Palestiniens et les Koweïtiens"

père. Elle l'assiste, l'aide à se remettre de ce traumatisme. Affaibli dans un fauteuil de sa chambre d'hôtel, les bras ballants, le tout nouveau rapatrié du Golfe reçoit des amis. L'un d'entre eux, un petit gros aux lunettes rondes a en son temps subi le même sort. Mais pour Walid, il n'en est pas

d'artistes, d'acteurs, de journalistes de toutes les nationalités, ma porte était grande ouverte à tous ces gens."

"Je veux savoir"

Une semaine déjà. Sept jours. Auparavant, Walid Abou Bakr

était encore à la tête du "Reconciliation Committee". A deux reprises, il avait rencontré le Prince pour lui demander des comptes sur sa politique envers les Palestiniens. "Nous essayions d'obtenir un allègement de la pression exercée sur nos compatriotes. Notre action était purement humanitaire" assure Walid Abou Bakr. "S'il avait été une menace pour la sécurité du pays, il n'aurait même pas été reçu par le Prince" affirme l'ami. Logique et imparable. Mais le mystère sur les raisons de son expulsion ne s'éclaircit pas pour autant. "J'espère savoir un jour, affirme Walid Abou Bakr, peut-être quelqu'un a-t-il menti, peut-être agit-il d'une erreur entre plusieurs noms... Je veux savoir".

En attendant, la situation familiale de ce Palestinien, originaire de Yabod, un petit village de Cisjordanie, est insoluble. Evidemment, il ne peut retourner. A Koweït, sa dernière femme est bloquée, avec cinq enfants, dont deux sont de lui. Deux filles, Sirar, 8 ans, et Sara, 7 ans.

Sa dernière épouse, Laïla Othman, écrivain, membre d'une grande famille a eu trois enfants d'un mari différent, non-Koweïtien. Celui-ci est maintenant décédé. "Les autorités ont donné un passeport aux trois enfants, mais pas la nationalité koweïtienne. Ils ne peuvent pas quitter définitivement le territoire" explique Walid Abou Bakr.

"C'est la destruction d'une famille!" lance l'ami de Walid. Il ajoute : "Abou Bakr et son épouse étaient des symboles pour l'harmonie entre les Palestiniens et les Koweïtiens". Aujourd'hui, les symboles ne sont plus que mirages. Les 400.000 Palestiniens du Koweït d'avant la guerre ne sont plus que 30 ou 40.000.

Dans sa chambre de l'hôtel Philadelphia, Walid Abou Bakr prépare sa réinsertion. Première étape : trouver un appartement dans un pays, frappé de plein fouet par la crise du logement. Walid découvre Amman où il fait des rencontres inopinées. Un Jordanien qui l'a récemment reconnu lui a dit : "Si Walid Abou Bakr est ici, c'est qu'il n'y a plus de Palestiniens au Koweït".

Francis Mazoyer

## L'EDITO

de Suleiman Sweiss

## Servir le drapeau

LE GOUVERNEMENT vient de demander à la chambre de geler la loi sur le service militaire. Pourquoi une telle initiative? Tout d'abord, selon le Premier Ministre, l'armée n'a plus de problème de recrutement, comme ce fut le cas dans les années 70. Aujourd'hui, le taux de chômage en Jordanie est d'environ 30%. Les jeunes, qui se rabattent sur l'armée, viennent donc grossir ses effectifs.

Second argument : en cas de guerre, on ne peut pas compter sur des appels, mais sur des professionnels.

Enfin, le Premier Ministre a reconnu : l'expérience des 12 dernières années d'application de cette loi n'a pas donné le "fruit espéré". A savoir créer le sentiment d'appartenance nationale!

On ne décrète pas un service militaire pour empêcher les gens d'aller travailler dans d'autres contrées, où ils trouvent des salaires plus intéressants. Ne l'oublions pas, cette période de la vie consacrée à la nation, c'est un devoir national que tout citoyen doit accomplir.

Le premier argument fourni par le pouvoir n'est pas satisfaisant. Un pays ne met pas en place un "service" en fonction des circonstances économiques. De même pour sa suppression. La deuxième option laisse rêveur. En période de guerre, la patrie a besoin de l'armée régulière et des appelés. Nous sommes tout près de l'ennemi israélien. Celui-ci a mille fois démontré ses tendances expansionnistes. C'est clair, l'Etat Hébreu refuse catégoriquement la paix. L'attitude de ses dirigeants lors des pourparlers bilatéraux de Washington en est la preuve flagrante. Le danger étant toujours présent, nous avons besoin d'une armée forte pour nous défendre, et donc d'un "service militaire".

Ces dernières années, la loi a peut-être montré ses côtés négatifs. C'est fort possible. Dans ce cas, il est impératif d'étudier ses défaillances, dans le but de trouver des solutions. La clé du problème ne réside certainement pas dans le gel ou la suppression du "service".

Dans certains pays, le "service national" peut être effectué à l'extérieur de la caserne. Pourquoi ne pas appliquer cette méthode en Jordanie? Tout en préservant les six premiers mois, consacrés à l'entraînement militaire.

La question est maintenant posée au parlement. S'il se prononce pour la suppression du "service", ce sera un pas en arrière.

F.M.

Pour information : IEAPO: Tél/11 872.

Journée du 8 mars en Jordanie

## La femme toujours privée de ses droits

Seulement 9 femmes pour 213 postes de "direction" dans la fonction publique. Du chemin reste à parcourir

"POURQUOI ALLER à une telle conférence?" s'interroge une experte qui n'a pas daigné se rendre au dernier "meeting" de "l'Union professionnelle des femmes". "Vous voyez bien, à chaque fois, ce sont les hommes qui dirigent les débats" ajoute-t-elle. Cette réunion de trois jours, à la Chambre d'Industrie, loin d'être satisfaisante, a tout de même soulevé quelques questions essentielles. Selon plusieurs rapports, les femmes sont sous-représentées dans les secteurs de l'industrie, de l'agriculture et du commerce. Elles ont bien du mal à franchir les portes des institutions jordanien et des plus grands syndicats.

## Pas de femme cadre supérieure

Dans une étude sur le travail de la femme dans le secteur public, Dr Hilmi Al Sarabi affirme, chiffres à l'appui, que les femmes, à une exception près, ne deviennent pas ministres. Elles ne peuvent s'imposer dans les postes de "secrétaires généraux" ou de directeurs. Ces statistiques, qui mettent en balance les nombres de femmes et d'hommes dans les ministères oublient de mentionner la catégorie "cadres supérieurs". En son sein, la femme est totalement absente.

Chez les simples "directeurs" de la fonction publique, seulement 9 femmes ont réussi à se faire une place sur 213 postes au total. Pourtant, "les règlements n'opposent aucun obstacle aux femmes qui veulent accéder à toutes ces professions, ils ne font cas d'aucune discrimination" précise le Dr Sarabi.

Où se trouve l'origine du malaise? Certaines femmes fonctionnaires déclament qu'elles sont défavorisées pour l'obtention d'une promotion ou d'un poste élevé. D'autres, résignées, soulignent qu'elles ne veulent pas sacrifier leur vie familiale.

"Le fossé se creuse entre les lois et leur degré d'application" souligne le Dr Subhi Al Qasem dans son rapport sur la place de la femme dans l'agriculture.

Selon cet expert, la société jordanienne n'accepte pas encore une participation à grande échelle de la femme dans ce secteur. Pourtant, son étude montre clairement que dans ce domaine, si elles deviennent propriétaires de la terre, les femmes font preuve de beaucoup plus d'efficacité que les hommes.

Autre intervention intéressante: Karima Ohanem, experte, qui présente le seul rapport écrit par une femme, met l'accent sur la non-participation du "sexe faible" au sein des syndicats. "On ne trouve pas un seul docteur féminin qui ait réussi à entrer au Conseil de son syndicat. Bien



Les femmes sont sous-représentées dans la plupart des secteurs de l'économie

qu'il comprenne un comité spécial pour les dames".

Selon plusieurs chercheurs, la femme hésite encore à s'affirmer. Certaines ne connaissent d'ailleurs même pas leurs droits. Ce phénomène est aussi imputé aux traditions de la société qui limitent le champ d'action de la femme. Selon Suhair Al Tall, auteure de "La femme, le mouvement féministe en Jordanie", "l'homme peut participer à faire évoluer les choses, mais la femme reste la seule à comprendre ses problèmes et à pouvoir les résoudre".

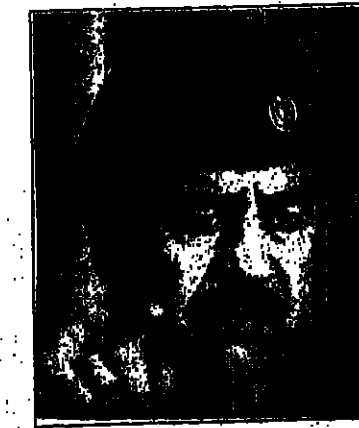
Saada Khami

La leçon de Saddam

## La machine à coudre contre l'embargo en Irak

"AU LIEU de parler de l'embargo, il vaut mieux apprendre à coudre aux Irakiennes, pour y faire face", s'est récemment exclamé le président Saddam Hussein à l'adresse de l'Union générale des femmes d'Irak. "Lors d'une réunion, il serait plus utile d'apporter une dizaine de machines à coudre pour apprendre à vos compatriotes à confectionner des habits et combler le manque sur le marché", a ainsi parlé Saddam Hussein. Il a invité les membres de l'organisation à "transformer ses 'meetings' théoriques en travaux pratiques".

"Si les hommes subviennent aux besoins du pays en aliments et les femmes en vêtements, l'embargo n'aura plus d'importance", a poursuivi le chef de l'Etat irakien en recevant des femmes qui avaient fait partie, en 1990, du groupe des pacifistes du "bateau de la paix" Ibn Khaldoun. Parti le 6 décembre 1990 du port d'Alger, avec quelque 250 personnes à bord, et 13.000 tonnes de produits ali-



mentaires, le bateau ne devait arriver au port irakien d'Qum Qsar (sud) que le 15 janvier 1991. L'expédition avait été contrainte par la coalition anti-irakienne de décharger sa cargaison dans le port ommanais de Qabous. Saddam Hussein avait déjà et à plusieurs reprises exhorté ses concitoyens à s'adapter à la rigueur de l'embargo économique international qui frappe Bagdad depuis août 1990. Il avait notamment appelé les Irakiens à

"s'abstenir d'achats superflus, à s'habiller sobrement et à accepter la nourriture frugale pour triompher de l'embargo". Il s'était lui-même déclaré prêt à boycotter durant une année les vêtements et les produits de luxe.

Le nouvel appel du président coïncide avec celui de la presse officielle qui dénonce depuis quelques jours la flambée des prix des produits de première nécessité, ainsi que des vêtements. S'en prenant violemment aux marchands spéculateurs qui "augmentent le sang des enfants du peuple", Saddam Hussein a menacé de les punir sévèrement. "Nous allons essayer de traiter avec eux avec ménagement pour les dissuader de continuer à jouer avec les prix", a-t-il déclaré. Cependant, le jour viendra où nous dirons que la douceur n'a servi à rien". Avertissement ferme du chef de l'Etat irakien à la télévision. "Alors il faudrait que les Irakiens qui ne comprennent pas bien le châtiment qu'elles méritent".

(AFP)

Téléx... France

BEREGOVY - Le ministre français de l'économie et des finances, Pierre Bérégovoy, a affirmé dimanche qu'il avait l'intention d'écrire à ses collègues du groupe des sept nations les plus industrialisées (G7) pour qu'une "initiative" soit prise en vue de favoriser la croissance mondiale. "On ne peut pas s'en sortir tous séparément" a déclaré Pierre Bérégovoy sur la chaîne française TF1. Il a précisé qu'un tel projet pourrait voir le jour lors du prochain sommet des sept à Munich.

BERE II - Pierre Bérégovoy a incité dimanche soir le gouvernement algérien à "revenir au respect du droit", tout en se défendant d'ingérence dans les affaires intérieures de ce pays. "Je suis pour que la démocratie et les droits de l'homme soient partout respectés" a-t-il déclaré sur TF1. Il a également indiqué qu'il était dérangé par l'arrestation des membres du Front Islamique du Salut (FIS).

KOUCHNER - Le secrétaire d'Etat français à l'action humanitaire, Bernard Kouchner, va organiser pour le compte de la CSCE (Conférence sur la sécurité et la coopération en Europe), l'ouverture de couloirs humanitaires au Nagorny Karabakh. But de l'opération : acheminer l'assistance nécessaire à la population. Cette décision a été prise les 27 et 28 février à Prague, lors de la réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de la CSCE, pour tenter de faire baisser la tension dans cette enclave à majorité arménienne en Azerbaïdjan.

TROUPES - La France va fournir 2.000 hommes à la force des Nations Unies chargée de maintenir la paix en Yougoslavie. Le contingent français sera le plus important, au sein de la force des Nations Unies, qui devra faire respecter le cessez-le-feu dans la république de Croatie, qui a déclaré son indépendance au mois de juin dernier. Cette troupe commune, (UNPROFOR), qui comprendra également des observateurs d'environ 30 pays, pourrait coûter 634 millions de dollars pour une année, selon les estimations.

MANIF - Une vingtaine d'associations et de syndicats appellent à manifester contre le Front National (Parti d'extrême-droite) le 18 mars à Paris, deux jours avant le premier tour des élections régionales à annoncer le Collectif de l'Appel des 250. L'organisateur du défilé, doit notamment regrouper la fédération anarchiste, les Jeunes communistes révolutionnaires, le "Ligue communiste", le "syndicat étudiant UNEF-ID et l'Union syndicale des Algériens de France".

## Une exposition pour préserver Pétra!

Suite de la page 11

dimensions, du site et de ses alentours. Au CCF, les deux gros partenaires français exposent leurs techniques au grand public jordanien, sous forme de panneaux ou de films vidéo. Marc Albowy, Responsable du mécénat technologique et scientifique à EDF, tiendra une conférence dimanche 15 mars à 20h00 dans les locaux de l'IEAPO.

Côté jordanien, le "Service des Antiquités", le Ministère du

Tourisme" sont de plain-pied dans l'exposition. Les Universités de Jordanie et du Yarmouk, la Jordan University for Science and Technology (JUST), la "Weir Authority", la "Petra National Trust", la NRA, et le Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) présenteront leurs activités autour du site de



Lettre ouverte d'un Jordanien qui demande au ministre du Tourisme de protéger Pétra

l'ancienne capitale des Nabatéens. Pétra est classée dans le "Patrimoine Mondial". C'est donc une instance internationale, l'UNESCO, "Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture" qui chapeaute l'exposition, "Sauvegarde de Pétra", qui se tient au CCF jusqu'au di-

manche 29 mars a déjà reçu de nombreuses propositions. L'exposition pourrait se déplacer vers la JUST, s'insérer dans le cadre du "5ème Congrès International d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de la Jordanie" du mois prochain. Selon des informations recueillies par le Journal, l'UNESCO penserait déjà à présenter l'exposition à son siège parisien, lors de la célébration l'été prochain, du XXème anniversaire de la Convention du Patrimoine Mondial. Peut-être l'occasion de donner une dimension internationale à cette campagne pour "la sauvegarde de Pétra".

F.M.

Pour information : IEAPO: Tél/11 872.





### Congratulations!!

Graduations, appointments, engagements, weddings, newborns, promotions, special awards, excellent achievements.....

Drop us a line and send a photo...we will run it free of charge in The Star's People and Events page.

Her Majesty Queen Noor patronized a three-day conference organized by the Professional Women's Club last Sunday which coincided with International Women's Day. Discussions during the conference centered on concerns of the Jordanian woman and her social role in trade, industry and union affiliations. Participants included Mrs Hind Abdul Jabher, chairperson of the club, and from Philadelphia University Dr Yasser Al Odwan and Dr Atif Odeibat.

As part of the charity campaign organized by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Voluntary Work during Ramadan, HRH Princess Basma toured last Friday the Maan and the Safa centers for social work. She met with residents and officials from charitable societies who briefed her on the role of such institutions in contributing to the welfare of the local community.

Princess Basma stressed the importance of charity campaigns in providing women with the necessary training to make them eligible for a more independent role in society by being able to fend for themselves.

Dr Tayseer Abdul Jabher, executive secretary general of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Jordan, left for Lebanon on Monday in response to an invitation extended by the Lebanese government.

ESCWA's involvement comes as part of a plan by the Lebanese government to rebuild the country's infrastructure, which was badly damaged in the last decade by civil war. Dr Abdul Jabher was accompanied by a team of officials and experts.

The Jordanian Writers Association elected on Sunday president and members of the association. Mr Fakhr Kassar was voted president. The new administrative body consists of Mr Ibrahim Al Abssi, Mr Salim Al Nakhass, Mr Mohammad Said Madhah, Mr Youssef Damra, Mr Badr Abdul Haq, Mr Hashem Gharaybeh, Mr Mohammad Ghawdayeh, Mr Jamal Naji, Mr Ibrahim Khalil and Mr Raja Abu Ghazaleh.

President of Philadelphia University Dr Muhayiddin Touq met with the French cultural attaché and discussed means of enhancing cultural relations. The meeting was attended by Dr Tayseer Al Odwan, acting dean of the faculty of arts, administrative sciences and law; and Dr Saleh Abu Isba, director of public relations at the university. In other matters, the public relations department at the university has finished preparing the program of the cultural season for the second semester of 1992, which will include seminars on "Orientalism", "Poverty and Un-



Jordan Petra Rally team is preparing to join the Jordan International Rally competition to be held from 21 to 22 May. The event will start from the Roman Amphitheater in downtown Amman and will finish at the Marriott Hotel. Champions from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Qatar, Bahrain, Cyprus, Turkey, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Ireland and Syria will participate.

The International Motor Sports Federation, represented by new president Mr Max Mosely, who is expected to attend, has also showed an interest in the rally.

Jordan Petra team drivers for the 1992 events will include the following drivers and assistants: Marwan Abu Hamad as driver and Khalid Zakariya as his co-driver, Mohammad Al Natour as the team manager, Tawfiq Haqur and Haltham Al Mously in maintenance. In addition, there will be ten specialists in maintenance and administration to back up the team.

Jordan was recently elected as a member of an international committee formed by FISA to study and recommend changes and improvements to all the international championships. Other committee members include the USA, Germany, Australia, Spain and Japan.



Moroccan food comes to town! "Dish and Dash", Amman's new Moroccan restaurant and café has now opened just off first circle. Restaurant proprietor Mr Elias Salameh invites you for some speciality couscous in the elegantly tiled upstairs restaurant, or for an espresso or cappuccino in the comfy downstairs café. Food is reasonably priced and filling!

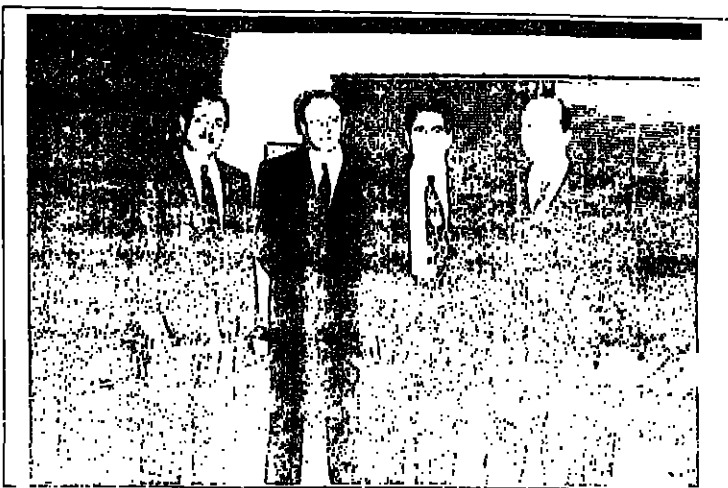
employment in Jordan", Culture and Technology" and other topics.

Currently, the university is hosting a paintings exhibition of "The Blue Rider" in cooperation with the Goethe Institute in Amman.

Cathay Pacific Airlines and its agent in Jordan, Grand Tourism, held a seminar at the Regency Palace last week during which Ms. Muna Muasher briefed the audience on the airline's on-board services and the company's introduction of advanced computers for reservations. Later, dinner was served. The event

was attended by tour agents, members of the press and invited guests.

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education Mr Thougat Al Hindawi Tuesday patronized the opening of an educational TV studio equipped with new hi-tech systems presented by the Japanese government to enhance mutual cooperation between the two countries. The new studio is expected to improve the quality and quantity of the educational programs to tally with the new curricula of the ministry. The inauguration took place at the ministry's Curricula Department.



## Horizon opens a European liaison office in Paris

Mr Rafic Saadeh, chairman of the Horizon Advertising and Communication Network, stated that the office is planning to take advantage of the opportunities created by the "one Europe" in 1992. "The business opportunities presented by a unified Europe will significantly affect the business operations in our marketplace," stated Mr Saadeh. "We want our second European presence to be in the heart of the continent, to supply our European-headquartered clients with an even closer and easier access to their Middle East agency."

Mr Georges Saadeh will head the Paris office with the primary objective of developing global business for the agency's market and to establish Paris as another Regional Operating Platform closely coordinating with the main network's regional platform and its Regional Manager Mr Gregory Tikhanoff, based in the Athens Headquarters.

Graduating at the top of his law class at St. Joseph French University of Beirut, Mr Georges Saadeh specialized in international law. His appointment as the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) representative for the Middle East launched him on a new career in sponsorship, advertising and promotion. Mr Georges Saadeh brings ten years of agency experience to his position as general manager of a field office of a top regional ad agency and as a business development director/ Europe liaising with the agency's multinational associate.

Although the two Mr Saadehs are not related, "We do try at Horizon to engender a family spirit and commitment in our employees," quipped Mr Rafic Saadeh.



### Agenda

#### Films

The American Cultural Center will present the feature film "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" today right after the ABC News Weekly Highlights at 2:30 pm. An Award-winning musical comedy that is distinguished not only for its excellent score, but for the brilliant dancing as well. The film will be shown again next Sunday.

#### What's going on at the

### Amman Plaza this Ramadan

The Amman Plaza Hotel adds a special touch to Ramadan by providing its visitors and guests with a unique atmosphere reflecting the oriental style presented in a traditional *Souk* with *Foul*, *Rajafel*, *Tamriyeh* and *Saj* bread. Guests can enjoy their meal or snack in a background of oriental music. After *Iftar* and until midnight, visitors can enjoy Arabic coffee in a real tent with a selection of Ramadan sweets, buffet, refreshments, pipes (*nargileh*), or they can simply play cards or backgammon.

quished not only for its excellent score, but for the brilliant dancing as well. The film will be shown again next Sunday.

The French Cultural Center will present the film "Une si jolie petite plage" on Monday 16 March at 8 pm. The film is about a youth who comes back to the orphanage where he was raised.

#### Exhibitions

At the French Cultural Center there will be an exhibition entitled "Techniques modernes appliquées à l'archéologie et protection du site de Petra" showing the restoration works in Petra done by local and international institutions like GTZ, IGN, UNESCO, the Ministry of Antiquities and the Ministry of Tourism. The exhibition will run until 29 March.

#### Lectures

At the French Cultural Center, Professor Bernard Huguenaud will be lecturing on "Les roches sont vivantes à l'échelle historique" on Tuesday 17 March at 4 pm.

#### Theater

The last showing of the Arabic play "Long Live Gelgelmeh" will take place tonight, Thursday, at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC). Curia will be at the special Ramadan time of 9 pm.

By George J. Tanber  
at large  
Special to The Star

BUCHAREST, Romania — Something was different about the cemetery I stumbled upon as I tried to find my hotel in the center city. All of the headstones were shiny white, the grounds unusually crowded with sad-faced women dressed in black.

I walked up and down the six evenly spaced rows of marble headstones, looking for a clue. The I noticed the dates: Every person had died during a five-day period in December 1989.

I had found Belu, the resting place of the martyrs from the Romanian revolution.

It was a revolution few thought would ever take place. One by one the Eastern bloc regimes fell until only Romania remained. Nicolae Ceausescu's grip was too firm, people said. It would not happen here.

But in mid-December 1989, when Ceausescu left for Iran, the people went into the streets.

Dr Emil Duhnea, a philosophy professor, was there. His wife, Sylvia, had a bad feeling about her 39-year-old husband attending the demonstrations. But she did not try to stop him. She knew it meant too much.

Gabriela Poescu, a 21-year-old laborer, was there, too, as was Mihai Gitan, 19, a rock musician, and 21-year-old Nicholas Stan, an electrician. Alexander

## Belu A resting place for Romania's revolution martyrs

Bogdan begged George, his son, not to go, but he went anyway.

Ceausescu returned to a Bucharest in chaos. Some of his deputies had turned against him, and he was effectively deposed. The army was called in, and Ceausescu's secret police converged on the city to defend its leader. At 5:30 pm on Dec. 21, the first shots were fired. The shooting did not stop until Christmas Day, after Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, were executed by a firing squad.

Gabriela Poescu never returned home. Neither did Nicholas Stan. Three bullets struck Mihai Gitan in the chest, killing him instantly. Alexander Bogdan's worst fears were realized when he discovered his missing son's body in a city morgue. Sylvia Duhnea spent three days searching for Emil. She found him on Christmas Day with a bullet in his heart. She was eight months pregnant with the son her husband would never see. She named him Emil.

In all, 544 people died in Bucharest. After the fighting ceased, a new crisis arose. Since many of the city's cemeteries



were full, where would they bury the dead?

Someone had an idea. There was an empty lot on Serban Way, in front of the old Belu Cemetery. The families of 276 victims agreed to bury their dead there.

At Belu's entrance, a center walk way leads to a walled mound of black dirt. From its center, a large pole rises skyward; on it is a board that lists 267 names. Three words are inscribed: "Don't forget them." Dozens of burning candles are plugged in the dirt surrounding the pole.

The six rows of headstones at Belu stretch the length of two football fields. Each of the headstones has a cross carved out of

its upper left corner. Around every above-ground crypt are three-sided troughs for flowers. Aside the troughs are black metal boxes for the candles, which symbolize eternal life in the Romanian Orthodox faith. Photographs of the deceased are set into many of the headstones.

Belu is always crowded, according to Constantine Preda, who manages the cemetery for the government. Special tour buses bring mourners from all over the country to light candles for the martyrs, he says.

Signs of overwhelming grief accompany every step. Someone has just been to Mihai Gitan's grave. A note, signed by "a fellow French rocker," reads in part: "I will dedicate a song for you. Liberty will conquer all."

Gabriela Poescu's family has placed a poster next to her crypt. It says: "She was demonstrating peacefully for a free Romania, and she was killed by the Ceausescu regime."

The family of Nicholas Stan left a signboard next to his grave, too. It tells the story of his final night. Stan had been to the square in front of the Romanian TV building and had seen people die, but he wanted to return. His mother asked him not to go. He replied: "Mother, in everyone's life there is a time when a train goes by. You must learn when to

catch it. For me the train is now." His mother writes: "It's a train that had two stops. One was at the TV building. The other was at 21 years, 4 months and 10 days."

At her husband's grave, Sylvia Duhnea completes washing the crypt, and rearranges the polished carnations that rest on top. Duhnea says the government will pay her 1,500 lei (\$75) a month for each of her three children until they are 18. She is grateful, but she remains concerned. The new government, led by former Ceausescu crony Ion Iliescu, resembles the previous regime. "Nothing has changed," she says, raising a question she dare not ask: Did they die in vain?

Two head stones away, Alexander Bogdan places four new candles in the box next to his son's grave. George was 36, and like his father worked as a technician at dam sites. Bogdan fights the candles and then sits on a bench in front of the crypt. He says he was initially opposed to burying his son at Belu. "But my family and friends told me it would be better, so in the end I agreed."

Bogdan feels differently than Sylvia Duhnea about the sort of progress that has been made since Ceausescu's demise. "I can come and go as I please," he says. "I can say what I want. I am free. My son died for a good cause."

Yet however improved things are, it does not make up for his loss, he says. "All I feel is grief and sorrow. The shadow of his death follows me everywhere."

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A sharp joke makes a serious point when it hits home.

[illegible]

*By Ghassan Ghanem*

East returned the diamond Jack and the contract went two down for an absolute top.

## Elephant campfires

## When snakes try to chew gum and crawl at the same time

"Well, one guess which table wants another round of banana daiquiris."

Reggae superstar Maxi Priest is back in a Jamaican studio working on a followup disk to his "*Bona Fide*" album, which he hopes to have out by May. Priest's latest "*Best of Me*" collection has gone bulleting up the charts and Charisma records has just released two early Maxi Priest albums, "*Intentions*" and "*You're Safe*," which were previously unavailable in the states.

A detailed diagram of a hand saw. The saw is shown in a cross-sectional view. The blade is labeled with 'Cutting edge' at the top and 'Heel' at the bottom. The handle is labeled 'Handle' and 'Rivets' (referring to the screws holding the handle to the blade). The 'Bolster' is the piece of wood between the handle and the blade. The 'Tang' is the part of the blade that fits into the handle. The 'Neb' is the part of the blade that is not in the handle. The diagram also shows a pile of cut wood chips and a small pile of sawdust.

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER: CONSTELLATION

REPOCHLS CORP I OC  
OZENI THI SUNEVG O  
EATENALPNNADIRG  
TEREHPSI MEHNOI I  
ENOI ROUWNGI SRVO  
MCODEB I GDIPPERW  
NRUTASRLRATS CSN  
SATWHGALGMOONRY  
NUEI HEUUOSTEAAA  
ERMNSMQBAPSUCMW  
VOOSII ASTROLOGY  
ARCNFNSECSI PALK  
EAOTWINKLELZATL  
HUTELESCOPEI ONI  
SURUATSREKCLFEM

1. **City Slickers**, *Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern*, Columbia TriStar Home Video (PG-13-1991)
2. **Escargot**, *Kurt Russell, Robert De Niro*, MCA/Universal Home Video (R-1991)
3. **The Silence of the Lambs**, *Jodie Foster, Anthony Hopkins*, Orion Home Video (R-1991)
4. **FX2: The Deadly Dehusion**, *Bryan Brown, Brian Dennehy*, Orion Home Video (PG-13-1991)
5. **Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves**, *Kevin Costner*, Warner Home Video (PG-13-1991)
6. **What About Boy?, Bill Murray, Ricard Dreyfuss**, Touchstone Home Video (PG-1991)
7. **Hudson Hawk**, *Bruce Willis, Danny Aiello*, Columbia TriStar Home Video (R-1991)
8. **Mortal Thoughts**, *Demi Moore, Bruce Willis*, Columbia TriStar Home Video (R-1991)

1. Dangerous, *Michael Jackson*, Epic
2. Too Legit to Quit, *Hammer*, Capitol
3. Time, Love and Tenderness, *Michael Bolton*, Columbia
4. Nevermind, *Nirvana*, Geffen
5. Cooleyhighharmony, *Boyz II Men*, Motown
6. Achtung Baby, *U2*, Island
7. Unforgettable, *Natalie Cole*, Elektra
8. We Can't Dance, *Guns N' Roses*, Atlantic
9. Metallica, *Metallica*, Elektra
10. Use Your Illusion II, *Guns N' Roses*, Geffen

**SOURCE:** Detroit Free Press, Macmillan Illustrated Animal Encyclopedia; Research by NANCY ROSS-FLANIGAN

**"BEVERLY HILLS, 90210"** (Worldvision, \$89.95): The Fox Broadcasting TV series now is entrenched as required weekly viewing for many teen-age fans, but for those who want to sample the move by twins Brenda and Brandon Walsh (Shannen Doherty, Jason Priestley) from Minneapolis to L.A. again, this is the original pilot for the show. Other regulars include Jennie Garth and Luke Perry. \*\* (Not rated: AS, P)

**"BROADWAY MELODY OF 1936"** (MGM/UA, \$19.98): One of several classic Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer musicals newly released on video, veteran director Roy Del Ruth's black-and-white 1935 classic earned an Academy Award for its choreography. Jack Benny plays a newspaper columnist who uses a dancer (Eleanor Powell) in his plot to wreck a producer (Robert Taylor); Una Merkel and Buddy Ebsen also appear. \*\*\* (Not rated)

**Print answer here:**

**AJAX CONTRACTORS, INC.**



Another increase?!

**THE CHARGES GO UP ALL THE TIME IN THIS BUSINESS.**

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

**Print answer here:**



# The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on  
Jordan  
Television  
from  
14-20  
March

## ENGLISH PROGRAM

### SATURDAY

8:30 — America's Funniest Home Videos.  
9:00 — Encounter  
9:30 — The Stump of Greut-noss.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Feature Film. "A Long Way Home": Maya is a 17-year-old Swedish teenager who works in London. Rupert is the spoiled 11-year-old she has to look after. Maya manages to win his confidence and their initial mutual dislike is transformed into friendship.

### SUNDAY

8:30 — Journeys to Art: A documentary program about the Moroccan Kingdom, the Islamic and Roman archaeological relics and their trade relations with Europe.  
9:10 — Equinox: Tonight's program talks about old age and senility in living creatures and scientific research on live cells.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Law and Order. "The Secret Shares": Why was the drug dealer killed in New York?

### MONDAY

8:30 — Land of Hope and Gloria.  
9:30 — Capital City.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Gambler: Gambler Hox and Montana continue efforts to reveal the senator and his associates to be manipulating Indian lands.

### TUESDAY

8:30 — Evening Shade. "Gambler Anonymous": The coach invites Mr Rogers, the well known singer, to his house.  
9:10 — Golden Years: Ohio police manage to stop the police car which the criminals used to escape in.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Selling Hitler: This



Michael Keaton in "The Dream Team", Thursday at 10:20

film portrays one man's obsession with the Hitler myth. So overwhelming was his obsession that he loses grip on reality.

### WEDNESDAY

8:30 — Teech.  
9:10 — World of Audubon:



A Long Way Home on Saturday at 10:20

10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Drug Wars: Drug dealer Camerno was kidnapped and killed in Mexico. Hanley chases the Killas and Kafficars.

### THURSDAY

8:30 — Spatz. "Local Hero": Lily, a Spatz worker, saves the life of a customer who choked while having his meal, so she becomes a local hero.  
9:10 — NBA Basketball.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Movie of the Week: "The Dream Team" Starring Michael Keaton: A psychiatrist decides to take his four patients to a baseball game in New York. The doctor is assaulted by a couple of bad policemen and his patients decide to defend him.

### FRIDAY

8:30 — Lenny: A friend of Lenny's father dies while visiting in Boston. Lenny, his father and his brother go to New York for the funeral and are stuck in a snow storm.  
9:10 — Derriek: Martin is being chased by three men who want to kill him. He resorts to the coach and his mistress for help, but is killed long before they decide to intervene.  
10:00 — News in English.  
10:20 — Chancer. "Temptation": Stephen agrees to help Franklin with a scam so that he would leave Douglas Motors alone.

### FRENCH PROGRAM

### SAMEDI

6:00 — Les tortues Ninja. A cartoon series.  
6:30 — La famille Fontaine. A series about a family, each time a different story.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — Carnet de notes. A classical music program.

### DIMANCHE

5:30 — La maison bleue. A cartoon series.  
5:45 — Sante vision. The program deals with heart diseases, coronary and vascular and the congenital malformation of hearts.

6:10 — L'école des fans. Children sing the songs of their favorite singers. Tonight's guest is Henry Dais.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — Fusions: The conservation of wooden art objects from the weather and particularly termites by using nuclear energy cobalt 60 and gamma rays that destroy all kinds of termites.

### LUNDI

6:00 — Le monde sous-marin de Jacques-Yves Cousteau. A documentary program about life on the sea.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — The Weekly Sports Magazine.

### MARDI

6:00 — Bouli. A program for children.  
6:15 — Les tortues Ninja. A cartoon series.  
6:30 — Le chevalier du labyrinthe. A game show program requiring talent and intelligence.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — Carnet de notes. A classical music program.

### MERCREDI

6:00 — L'ell écoute prague. A musical program.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — Intertropique. A documentary program about Niger.

### JEUDI

6:00 — Les artisans de la terre. A documentary program about agriculture.  
5:30 — Maguy. A comedy series about Maguy and her husband.  
7:00 — News in French.  
7:15 — Carnet de notes. A classical music program.

### VENREDI

5:30 — Pas une seconde à perdre: Vincent, an employee at the ministry of culture in Paris, is sent on a mission.  
7:15 — News in French.  
7:15 — Magazine Fusions: A program about computer's artificial intelligence and how it invades people's daily activities.

## JEANE DIXON'S Your Horoscope



ARIES (21 March - 19 April): You may not have all the information you need. Postpone any important financial moves until next week. Creative endeavours will prove satisfying, even if there is no immediate monetary gain.

TAURUS (20 April - 20 May): Make certain you reserve enough money to pay your monthly bills. Something that is developing very slowly prove valuable in the end. Tackle a backlog of odd jobs with partner's help.

GEMINI (21 May - 20 June): Catching small mistakes at work will save money and embarrassment. Someone behind the scenes plays a major role in your professional or personal life now. Romance peaks this weekend.

CANCER (21 June - 22 July): No challenge should be too great for you now. Your determination gives you a tremendous advantage. Friends prove to be good company. Romance changes certain plans. Avoid acting on impulse.

LEO (23 July - 22 August): Do not delay in following up on yesterday's success. Opening new lines of communication will benefit both your career and your social life. Rely on your own ingenuity and resources.

VIRGO (23 August - 22 September): A "heart and flowers" approach is best when it comes to romance. You draw strength from your loved ones. Tempers could flare at work. Keep a low profile and you will emerge unscathed.

LIBRA (23 September - 22 October): You will find this a splendid week for romance. You could be on the receiving end of a social concession. An opportunity arises to take advantage of a mistake. Keep business dealings strictly above-board.

SCORPIO (23 October - 21 November): Avoid becoming involved with controversial projects. Solitude helps you think. Creative work progresses nicely. Your financial future appears more secure. Sign employment agreements.

SAGITTARIUS (22 November - 21 December): Give some thought to insurance and tax matters. An expert offers timely advice. Get in touch with distant contacts. Your efforts to improve communication with loved one will soon pay off.

CAPRICORN (22 December - 19 January): Obscure knowledge comes to light at an opportune time. Good timing is the key to spectacular financial success. You recognize that speed is vital. Devote your weekend to family matters.

AQUARIUS (20 January - 18 February): Work on one thing at a time and heed your intuition. Higher-ups will reward your efforts with a raise or promotion. A new relationship has an excellent chance of becoming permanent.

PISCES (19 February - 20 March): The busier you are this week, the happier you will be. Work on bringing correspondence up-to-date. Loans involving friends are likely to cause trouble later on. Postpone signing binding agreements.

THIS WEEK'S CHILDREN have roving feet and will hate to stay in one spot for long. Every trip or change of scenery gives these children a new lease on life. Teachers need to handle them with diplomacy.

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Czechoslovakian	665105
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Finnish Consulate	623443
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Greek	672331
Hungarian	816614
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Iraqi	639331
Italian	638185
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Indonesian	828911
North Korean	666349
Norwegian Consulate	637164
Pakistani	622787
Palestine	677517
People's Rep. of China	666139
Philippines	645161
Polish	637153
Qatari	644331/2
Romanian	667738
Saudi Arabian	814154
South Korean	660745/6
Spanish	622140
Sudanese	644251/2
Swedish	669177/9
Swiss	686416/7
Syrian	641076
Tunisian	674307/8
Turkish	641251
United Arab Emirates	644369
United Kingdom	823100
United States of America	644371
USSR	641158
Yemen	642381
Delegation of the EEC	668191
UNDP	668171/7
UNRWA	669194/8
(Taiwan)	671530
UNICEF	629571
Con. of Sri Lanka	645312

## Airlines

Arab Air Cargo	674191/95
Aeroflot	641510
Air France	666066/782425
Air India	675888/9
Air Lanka	655377/655203
Alitalia	655203
American Airlines	669068
Arab Wings	894484
Austrian Airlines	637380/667028
Balkan Airlines	665909
British Airways	641430
China Airlines	637380
Cathay Pacific	624363
Cyprus Airways	667028
Egypt Air	630011
Emirates Airlines	662141/678321
Gulf Air	653606/656616
Hungarian Airlines	639295
Iberia	637827/644036
Iraqi Airways	628596/628598
Jordan Air Lines	630879
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Kuwait Airlines	630144
Libyan Arab Airlines	643831/2
Lufthansa	601744
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Olympic	630125/638433
PIA	625981
Philippine Airlines	670155
Qantas	641430/655447
Royal Jordanian	678321
Sabena Belgian Airlines	675888
Saudia	639333
Scandinavian Airlines	604649
Singapore Airlines	676177
Sudan Airlines	662111
Swiss Air (G.S.A.)	642943
Syrian Air	629831
TARCOM - Romanian	637380
Thai Airways	624430
Trans World Airline	659102
Turkish Airlines	628175
Yemenia Airways	640911
Yugoslav Airlines	640911

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## Diary

### Activities

#### Cultural centres

Royal Cultural Centre	661026/7
American Centre Library	641520
British Council	636147/8
French Cultural Centre	637009
Goethe Institute	641993
Soviet Cultural Centre	644203
Spanish Cultural Centre	624049
Turkish Cultural Centre	639777
Haya Arts Centre	665195
Husseini Youth City	667181/5
Y.W.C.A.	641793
Y.W.M.A.	664251
Amman Mun. Library	637111
Univ. of Jordan Library	834555

#### Cinemas

Concord	677420
Rainbow	625155
Plaza	674111
Philadelphia	634144
Nijoum	675571

#### Sports Clubs

Al Hussein Sports City	667181
Orthodox Club	810491
Royal Automobile Club	815410
Royal Shooting Club	736572
Royal Chess Club	637313
Royal Racing Club	09-801233
Jordan Bridge Assoc.	676990

### Rent-a-car

Shakhshir	668958
Al-Jabal	606669
Kada	665161/665153
Al-Labadi	813554
National	639197/8
Nebo	816792
Petra	605501
Rabbit Amman	672424
Al-Rimal	639861
Al-Samer	665181
Satellite	625767/621471
Star	604904
Tiger	671931
Trust	673312
Al-Waha	674105
Abu Dogge	644642/644906
Amin Jarrar (Avis)	670498
Amman	666327
Arabian	641350
Radio Jarrar	08/51000
Budget	604230
Des	669970
Dirani	666061
Europcar	601350/80
General Services	674100
Gulf	660902

### Hotels

Amman	798181
Crown	663100
Philadelphia	660100
Marriott	660000
Regency	660000
Jerusalem	665094
Intercontinental	641361
Ambassador	665186
Commodor	665181
Middle East	667150
Grand Palace	661121
Tyche	661114
International	841712
San Rock	813801
Alia Gateway	(08) 51000
Amra	815071
Plaza	674111
Aqaba	
Holiday Int'l	312426
Miramar	314340
Al-Cazir	314331
Coral Beach	313521
Aquamarina 1	316250
Aqaba	314091

### Important Numbers

Emergencies	
Amman Governorate	91228
Amman Civil Defence	198, 199
Civil Defence Irbid	271292
Civil Defence Dept.	661111
Ambulance	193, 775111
Amman fire brigade	198
First aid	630341
Blood Bank	775121
Civil Defence rescue	630341
Police rescue	621111, 637777
Police headquarters	639141
Traffic police	696390
Electric Power Co.	636381/4
Water complaints	897467
Queen Alia Airport	(08) 53200
RJ Flight Info	(08) 53200

### Hospitals

Husseini Medical Centre	813813
Khaled Maternity	644281/6
Akheh Maternity	642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mahsa, J. Amman	664171/4
Palestine, Shmelsani	669131
Shmelsani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Muasher Hospital	677227/9
The Islamic, Abdull.	666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdull.	664164/6
Italian-Al-Muhajroon	777101/3
Al-Bashir, Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	674155

### General

Jordan Television	773111/19
Radio Jordan	774111/19
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Hotel complaints	605800
Price complaints	661176
Telephone information	121
Jordan and Middle East calls	10
Repair service	623101

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Perth 9		India.....	91	Sanaa 5	
Sydney 2		Bangalore 812		Tai'z 4	
Austria.....	43	New Delhi 11		Nigeria.....	2
Vienna 222		Bombay 22		Lagos 1	
Bahrain.....	973			Norway.....	
Belgium.....	32	And all cities with area codes be-		Oslo 2	
Antwerp 3		ginning with 1,2,3,4,5,6,7, & 8.		Oman.....	19
Brussels 2				Pakistan.....	
Brazil.....	55			Karachi 21	
Rio de Janeiro 21				Lahore 42	
Brazilia 61		Indonesia.....	62	Peshawar 321	
Bulgaria.....	359	Jakarta 21	39	Rawalpindi/Islamabad 51	
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Czechoslovakia.....	42	Kuwait.....	965	Warsaw 22	
Prague 2		Korea.....	82	Qatar.....	9
Denmark.....	45	Seoul 2		Romania.....	
Copenhagen (Inner) 1		Libya.....	218	Bucharest 0	
Copenhagen (Outer) 2		Tripoli 21		Saudi Arabia.....	9
Ecuador.....	593	Lebanon.....	961	Al-Khobar 3	
Quito 2		Beirut 1		Al-Madina 4	
Egypt.....	20	Malaysia.....	60	Dammam 3	
Cairo 2		Kuala Lumpur 3		Jeddah 2	
Eire.....	353	Mexico.....	52	Mecca 2	
Dublin 1		Mexico City 5		Riyadh 1	
Cork 21		Morocco.....	212	Spain.....	
Finland.....	358	Fez 6		Barcelona 3	
Helsinki 0		Rabat 7		Madrid 1	
France.....	33	Netherlands.....	31		